SKETCHING IN WATER COLOURS

A BOOK FOR AMATEURS BY AN AMATEUR

JAMES STEUART

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JAMES STEUART

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FOREWORD

I MUST leave you to follow out the subject for yourself with such help as you may receive from the water-colour drawings accessible to you; or from any of the little treatises on their art which have been published lately by our water-colour painters. But do not trust much to works of this kind. You may get valuable hints from them as to the mixture of colours; and here and there you will find a useful artifice or process explained; but nearly all such books are written only to help idle amateurs to a meretricious skill, and they are full of precepts and principles which may, for the most part, be interpreted by their *precise* negatives, and then acted upon with advantage.

RUSKIN'S *Elements of Drawing*, § 187.

SKETCHING IN WATER-COLOURS

INTRODUCTION.

THIS book is written by an amateur for amateurs. The author has sketched since he was a boy with little professional teaching, and he has wrestled and is still wrestling with difficulties. With the experience thus gained he has found that he has sometimes been able to smooth the path for other strugglers, and with this object before him he has penned these pages.

There is no intention of raising class distinctions in excluding the real live artist from our conference. We stand in awe of him, and welcome the suggestions he so freely gives from his throne. He, however, lives a life apart from us—he gets his hair cut by a different barber. An Amateur may become an Artist, but an Artist cannot become an Amateur, grappling with the most initial difficulties long since forgotten by the Artist, but which are ever with us.

These remarks have, of course, to be taken with a grain of salt; and if you can enlist the sympathies of an artist in criticizing your

work, whether the criticism be of praise or blame, you are fortunate. Moreover, it is not intended to suggest that there is an Art for Artists and an Art for Amateurs. The aim of both should be the same, though the art of the amateur naturally is more elementary.

I am also well aware that there are many excellent manuals written by teachers; but in some of them there is a tendency on the part of the writer to prescribe his particular method of water-colour painting as the one and only way, albeit there are many, as a visit to any gallery at once proclaims. I can thoroughly recommend *Sketching from Nature*, by Mr. Tristram Ellis, as a useful guide.

These pages are not addressed to the young lady "who does not play but who paints a little," but to those who paint as much as they can and wish they could paint more—that is to say, to those who desire to take up sketching as a serious hobby. Without such a desire it is useless to waste money in buying a paint-box.

Possibly an artist may scoff at some of the rules laid down, but then he is a trained man and not an ignoramus. What is fun to him is death to us.

The worst of the amateur is that he is too ambitious. In this vice he is aided and abetted by kind friends, who tell him there is "a lovely view" from the top of the Edge—which view extends to many square miles—or who take him

for a picnic in a glen where there are thousands of trees. From the point of view of art he would be much better employed staying at home and drawing a wheelbarrow. Some people think they cannot sketch unless they have a ruined castle, but are discomfited by the difficulty of depicting the reflected lights on the ivy. Lakes have also an irresistible attraction for the many; in fact, the younger the artist the bigger the lake, and the more muddy the water. One of the objects of these pages will be to try to lead him to simpler themes and to endeavour to inspire in him enthusiasm, without which progress, not to speak of success, is impossible.

APPARATUS.

THE appliances should be limited to necessities, especially if there is much walking to be done in looking for a subject.

Lest it should be forgotten later I would put among the first necessities a piece of string. For want of this homely but useful article many a sketch has been spoilt. It serves to tie your impedimenta together and prevent their loss; it is necessary to mend your easel, secure your drawing to it, or to steady the easel with a stone.

As regards paper, place a ban upon that popular device a sketching-block, which by the time you have washed in your sky, assumes a surface like unto the Bay of Biscay, impossible to work on. Some laboriously damp the paper and stretch it on a drawing-board or frame made for the purpose, but these are heavy to carry. I find it better to get a frame-maker to lay down the paper on straw boards of any thickness selected; but what is really the best is to buy sketching-boards of an artists' colourman. These are lighter and are ready for work. They can be rested upon a piece

of straw board and attached thereto by drawing pins or clips. The advantage of them is that they are so light that several can be carried. I use the sizes 14 × 10 inches and 13 × 9 inches. Either of these sizes can be cut in two if a small sketch is selected.

Some people, in place of these water-colour boards, use a thick paper supported by a "three-

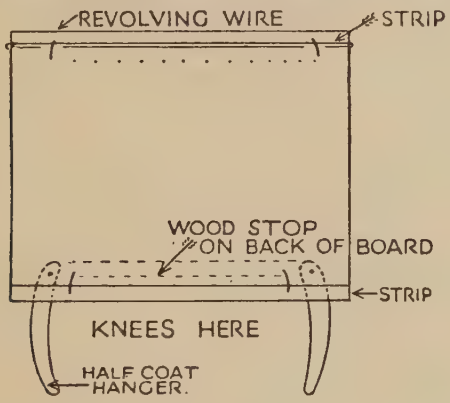


Fig. 1.

ply" board of the necessary size, which is little more than $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch thick and very light. This can be made very cheaply by any cabinetmaker. Get him to nail a strip of the wood on the top and bottom of the board with wires to swivel to hold the sketching-boards in place. If he cuts a "coat hanger" in half and makes it to fold down you can support the board by hooking it on to your legs, resting it on the knees. A stiff paper—any-

thing from 200 lb. to 300 lb. per ream—Whatman or unbleached Arnold, should be used. An "imperial" sheet cuts up into four sheets of the size I recommend, and can be easily affixed to the board by drawing pins or clips. Such paper will not "cockle" even in damp, wintry weather, but remains flat throughout without any preparation. It will stand "scrubbing," and if you spoil one side the other is still available.

You should always have a small sketch-book in your pocket.

Paint-box.—The usual tin box to hold ten pans or twenty half pans, with a space for brushes, is the most useful size.

If you use tubes of colours a box with a separate palette lid, with, say, fifteen colour compartments, is useful, as the palette can be filled before setting out, leaving the weightier box at home.

Brushes.—You don't want a lot of brushes. Sable are recommended, but I generally use a camel's-hair brush for washes—size 12. It is not so flexible as a sable brush, and you can turn it almost at right angles to the tin ferule if you want it for dragging with drier colour across the sketch to break up the surface of a wash. This with a sable brush, size 10, is all you want. You can also try a hog's-hair brush of the kind known as "Lyons hair." You do not need a very fine brush as a rule. You will be surprised how you can draw tree

PLATE 2.—HIGH STREET, PITTENWEEM (14 × 10 INCHES).

branches with a big brush, as long as the point is not worn off it, if you do not use the colour too wet. You can, however, add to your box a fine sable in case you want it.

Keep a small piece of fine sponge in your box, and try not to lose it. Add to your equipment two old linen handkerchiefs—one to hold in your left hand along with the paint-box to wipe superfluous colour off your brushes, or for cleaning them or the box; the other can be kept clean for lifting colour off a sketch.

You also, of course, require an H.B. or B. pencil, a knife, and piece of india-rubber. It is a mistake to say a woman cannot sharpen a pencil. She can, if you give her plenty of time and plenty of pencils. Her chief difficulty is that her knife is generally as blunt as a stick. I can keep my knife sufficiently sharp for all purposes by rubbing it on a scythe stone or the window sill. I also recommend a 6B. pencil. Apart from sketching with it you can use it to put in dark touches on a water-colour you have not time to finish before leaving the ground. Don't forget some sticks of charcoal.

Sketching Stool.—If it is a fine day you may sit on the ground if you so desire and rest the drawing-board on your knees, or between your knees if you are a mere man or a trousered female. A stool is, however, a necessity in most cases, and I know of none more convenient than the ordinary three-legged variety.

If, like me, you suffer from that incurable disease known as long legs, be sure to get a tall stool and thus avoid cramp. I also recommend a leather seat. Although more bulky than a web one it has not the same tendency suddenly to give way and deposit you on your back on the ground. If you fold one of the points of the triangular leather seat to meet the opposite edge and fold the other two points across, you reduce the bulk to go into your bag. If the point of the leg goes through a corner of the seat a saddler can put on a patch. If a leg breaks at the swivel a country joiner can make a new leg.

Easel.—At the commencement of your artistic career you don't want an easel, which suggests a certain amount of "swank" and pretence. Your sketch may not be worthy of your easel. Indeed, some artists do not use an easel for reasons other than the above. They consider they get a better slope for the paper by holding it on the knees, or laying it on a portfolio supported by the knees and a stick supporting the upper part of the portfolio. If you are sitting on the ground you can hold the sketching-board between your boots if you want to get it farther away from the eye.

After the elementary stage you will probably want an easel. This entails the disregard of the small boy's criticism that your representation of the cottage chimney is not straight. An artists' colourman will fit you out with

any amount of easels, which fold up, and contract, and possibly collapse—a failing of all easels. You pay your money and you take your choice.

One of the most useful easels for outdoor work I ever had I made myself. The prescription is as follows. Of a seedsman buy four stout bamboo garden canes, 4 or 5 feet long according to choice—I say advisedly four canes, although an easel has only three legs. Some inches from the top—preferably at a joint—tie pieces of wire off a soda-water bottle round three of the canes to prevent them splitting at the next operation. Then bore a hole through each cane about an inch below the wire—or burn the holes with a red-hot skewer. Take a short length of thicker wire, bend it to the shape of an L, pass the wire through the holes, and bend the end down. Borrow the kitchen saw from the cook, and cut off the tops of the three canes about an inch above the wire, and cut the foot of the legs, if necessary, to make them all the same length. You then have your tripod complete. To support the drawing-board take a piece of wood about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch square and 18 inches long. Drive a $1\frac{3}{4}$-inch wire nail through the wood about 3 inches from each end, and bore holes, one or more, in each of the two outside bamboo legs, push the wire nails through these holes, and you have your easel capable of erection or dismantling in a moment. One

or two tacks driven into the upper side of the wood helps to prevent the drawing-board from slipping off. Such an easel is strong and light, can be tied together with the legs of the stool and an old umbrella for carrying, or can be fastened to the cross-bar of your bicycle.

This patent is as liable to be blown over as any other easel. To obviate this, tie, if you can, one of the legs to the post of a fence or to a tree. Failing these take a piece of string, tie it round a stone, and hang the stone from the top of the easel so that it is suspended a few inches above the ground. You can fasten the drawing-board, reinforced if need be by a straw board behind, to the easel by expanding clothes pins (extremely useful and inexpensive articles), or you can get a bit of tin with a hook on it bent so as to slide up and down one of the legs and thus descend upon and hold the sketch.

I have not forgotten about the fourth cane. You got it in case you split one of the others ! But apart from that you need part of it. My easel is all right if it is standing on level ground ; but if the ground slopes the easel won't stand. To remedy this cut off two lengths of cane, 6 or 9 inches long, and carry them in your bag. If the ground is uneven you can lengthen two of the easel legs by fixing your two lengths of cane to the end of the legs by a thick piece of wire or a thin piece of wood inserted in

the hollow cane. If you have forgotten the cane, you can splice a twig to the two short legs with that ever useful string.

If you want a light collapsible easel you can get an aluminium tripod of a camera, the legs of which push inside one another in sections. You simply bore holes in two of the legs at a convenient height from the ground end, and use a cross piece of wood with two wire nails driven through it, as in the case of the easel first described.

Water.—If you paint in water-colours, water is a necessity. Not water in a 4-inch tin bottle with a 2-inch dipper hooked on to your paint-box, which spills over your paints. What you need is a good big bottle, or even two. A flat bottle, such as is used for whisky, is the most convenient shape, provided it is large enough. It is hopeless to expect clean washes or pure colour from dirty water. I remember an artist saying to me that he would rather walk half a mile and back for a supply of clean water than use the polluted article. As a reservoir a small jam pot, hung from the easel by a loop of string attached to another string or wire wound round the groove at the top of the pot, is most convenient; or you can get at a colourman's a collapsible india-rubber vessel, which attains the same object, and can be fastened to your colour-box by a wire circle supplied for the purpose. If you have not an easel, you will have to content yourself

with a tin dipper on your box, unless you can stand the jam pot on the ground or tie it to your walking-stick stuck in the ground. A spring clothes pin on the stick is an ideal thing from which to hang the pot.

A fine honeycomb *sponge* is the kind to get. It serves to clean your box, and, if held damp in the hand, it absorbs superfluous colour from your brush, though an old handkerchief does as well, or better. You can tear a small piece off the sponge and keep it in a corner of your paint-box for washing out skies or other portions of your sketch which require alteration. Get your brother to give you an old rubber tobacco pouch in which to keep the damp sponge. It is a good plan to tether the elusive sponge to you with a string.

I have never aspired to having a *sketching umbrella*, which is even more pretentious than an easel. I, however, always carry an old umbrella. If a shower comes on you can hoist the " gamp " by buttoning the stick inside your jacket.

A *sketching bag* made of canvas to hold sketching-boards 14 × 10 inches, is almost a necessity. One can be procured from an artists' colourman. If you sometimes use a larger board, get your sister to make you a cotton bag like a pillow-case to keep the boards clean.

If you go to the Highlands to sketch in September and do not take your winter flannels, put in your suit-case a woollen waistcoat and

a muffler. This may add to your creature comfort. If you forget these you must be content with a newspaper wrapped round your body under your waistcoat.

A friend whose beard is not so white as mine extols the delights of winter sketching out of doors, provided you are well wrapped up. If the weather is frosty he recommends taking a little whisky to mix with the water in the dipper to prevent the washes from freezing as you put them on. The objection to this—if you are a Scotsman—is that this plan does not always prevent the water from freezing, as even a hardy Scot is sometimes inclined to think it is better *he* should not freeze, and so the water is allowed to take its chance! Methylated spirit is nearly as serviceable so far as the washes—but not the hardy Scot—are concerned, though it tends to granulate some colours. One precaution is to use as dry a brush as possible, as the mixture has a tendency to spread upward as well as downward and may ruin a previous wash of another colour.

You will also require for winter sketching a "drier" to dry the washes; one of the familiar soldiers' cookers will serve the purpose. If sketching in wet weather you can rest your feet on a board.

If you are sufficiently robust, there can be no doubt that delightful subjects can be found in late autumn, winter, or early spring. If I had been an Andrew Carnegie I would have planned

a portable studio made of a "float," one of those vehicles with a bent axle which brings the floor within a few inches of the ground, and which in prosaic and inartistic circles is used for the conveyance of milk cans. Such a van, with a canvas cover on hoops and some provision of panes of glass for light, could be taken to the sketching ground by any old thing of a horse, and on its arrival could be moved into position by hand.

A very useful addition to your equipment is a light and inexpensive suit-case to carry all your apparatus if going on a holiday. Put in it a light glazed frame and some of your finished drawings, to show to inartistic friends at the hotel who do not appreciate the beginnings of sketches you make during your expedition.

COLOURS.

EVERY artist has a palette of his own, and you have only to look at the list of the paints used by well-known water-colourists in a book like Mr. Tristram Ellis's *Sketching from Nature* to see how the selection varies. You in your turn will choose your own palette as your experience extends. Some teachers recommend beginners to start with some half-dozen colours, but I see little reason for this. Doubtless an artist with a few paints and experience could get wonderful results from a few colours, but there seems no reason why the amateur should be so restricted when there is a wide range of pigments from which to select. The great thing in sketching is to be able to depict changing landscapes; and while you are trying to settle how to form some desired colour from your six paints, the sun becomes obscured, the wind rises, or the sea ebbs.

The following list is given, not as the best in existence, but as one which I have found in practice ample for almost any subject.

Cobalt is the blue which is the foundation of sky painting. Mixed with Light Red it forms

the lighter shadows of clouds, and with Yellow Ochre a green suitable for the greyer greens particularly of the distance.

French Blue is another essential colour. Mixed with Light Red it serves for the darker shadows of clouds; with the yellows it gives greens of any colour; with Raw Sienna you can get a neutral green for the shadows of trees; and with Brown Madder or Light Red it gives a colour suitable for shadows of buildings, rocks, etc., varying from light washes to the deepest dark. These two blues I find sufficient for my purpose without including *Indigo*, which is sometimes recommended for the foreground greens, being a very strong colour. *Prussian Blue* is occasionally useful for sea painting.

Light Red is also among the essentials. As I have said, with the blues it forms a simple mixture for clouds; it is useful for tiles and bricks, or as the basis for greys for buildings. A touch of it tones down crude greens, and it can be employed in dozens of ways.

Crimson Lake I pin my faith to in preference to the more costly Rose Madder. Though the latter is a finer colour, I do not find it works so easily, though this is not, I believe, a general experience. Some people use one of these colours with Yellow Ochre and Blue for cloud shadows, but it takes longer to mix three colours than two, such as Cobalt and Light Red.

Vermilion or *Scarlet Vermilion* is required if painting of gardens is attempted, and even with

them you will find a want in trying to paint poppies.

As regards yellows, I find that *Yellow Ochre*, *Indian Yellow*, *Raw Sienna*, and occasionally *Gamboge* serve my purpose, the first for the more neutral and distant greens, the second for the foreground greens, while the Gamboge is serviceable for the mid-distance or for a sharper green than the other two afford.

For brown shades you cannot go wrong with *Burnt Sienna* and *Sepia*. Raw Sienna and French Blue are the colours I have to replace most frequently in my box. They form a neutral green most useful for the dark parts of trees, and Raw Sienna, pure or slightly modified by other colours, gives admirable warm washes for autumnal grass or trees browned by the summer sun or autumn frosts. Burnt Sienna and Sepia are most useful mixed with blue for various neutral greens.

Most artists would warn you against ready-made greens, but if they are safely out of sight I would introduce you to Hooker's Green No. 1 and No. 2. They may be crude by themselves, but No. 1, modified by yellow, is useful to a degree for a grass green, and autumn tones can be gained by substituting Raw or Burnt Sienna for yellow. No. 2, which is a sharper green, is not so frequently useful, but a touch of it occasionally gives a green not otherwise easily obtained. *Olive Green* is another useful made green, especially for autumnal work, and these

three colours judiciously toned down are of infinite use for rapid sketching. *Emerald Green* is also often useful for particular effects, such as the greenish tone in the sky often visible near the horizon, or for seascapes.

Ivory Black and a tube of *Chinese White* should also be noted, but the latter is a dangerous weapon in the hands of an amateur.

It is best to get half pans in place of whole pans of all colours, except those you chiefly use. If you lay aside your box for a time it is better to find half pans dry and caked than whole pans. If this happens, put your box to soak in a basin of water, or drop some glycerine in the pans.

CHOICE OF A SUBJECT.

THE usual method is to start after breakfast or luncheon loaded with your impedimenta, and to wander about until you are hot looking for an ideal subject, which when found you are too tired to sketch. The best sketches I have ever made were done when I had three half-hours before catching a train, and had to paint the first thing handy. To avoid distracting fatigue the plan is to look for " bits " near your own home, or, if you are in strange country, to walk about at odd times unencumbered, searching for subjects to which you can go direct when you are ready to begin work. Whenever you arrive at a new place, another important point is to look for some shelter, such as the inside of a stable or shed, where you can sketch the interior or the view from the door should to-morrow be wet. Under a bridge you may find a haven of refuge from the storm. The method of preliminary exploration has one great objection—the landscape you found perfect when viewed subsequent to afternoon tea when the shadows are lengthening, is very different and possibly

less attractive when you settle down to it next day after your morning pipe.

Generally speaking the subject should be lighted from the right or the left, with the sun slightly behind you. If the sun is directly behind you the countryside looks flat—as your faithful sketch will also be—from the fact that the shadows are thrown away from you. A cardinal rule is never to sketch with the sun in your eyes unless you are sure you can do it. The sun then shines through the edges of clouds and trees, and there is a multitude of broken high lights perplexing to a degree to the beginner. Keeping these maxims in view, when you leave the shelter of your temporary abode notice where the sun is in the sky and which way the shadows are cast, and when you sit down keep the sun either on your right hand or on your left.

Another point which you must realize—and constantly remember—is the fact that the human eye is like a photographic camera and that you cannot focus it on the distance and the foreground at the same time. This is difficult to realize even after years of practice. You find a lovely view with hills in the distance and trees in the foreground. You think you see the details of the distance and the details of the trees at the same time—but you don't. Your eye is focused either on the hills or on the trees. Not knowing this is the case you paint the details of the hills and the details of the near

trees, and are surprised that the result is not so effective as you expected. Move to a point where a twig or a branch comes across the hills, concentrate your eye on the twig and you will find the details of the hills disappear and the colours become less bright and more blue or grey. Look at the hills and you will find the details of the twig become hazy. It therefore follows that if you want to concentrate attention on the hills you must suppress aggressive details in the foreground. If, on the other hand, you desire to make the near trees the feature, you must modify the background. This does not mean that there should be no details in the background or in the foreground as the case may be, but that the details in the part where the interest is not centred should be unobtrusive. It is extraordinary how difficult it is to make your ambition coincide with the rules of optics. Although, as I have said, I have sketched for many years, I still have the greatest difficulty in putting the above rule into practice. I wish I could show you as frightful examples some of my sketches of extensive landscapes. If one of these drawings were cut up into two or three, each might make a respectable sketch, but all joined together they are impossible.

To the statement that you cannot see the details of the distance and the foreground at the same time, any more than you can simultaneously distinctly see a man's face and his boot-laces, you may say that some artists of parts in their

landscapes show details in the foreground as well as in the distance in the same way as it is common to paint with almost equal minuteness the boot-laces as well as the features in a portrait. That such paintings can be successful while violating the laws of optics I think can be explained by the fact that the range of the human eye can be changed so fast that one naturally thinks one can see clearly two things at once, though there has in fact been an almost instantaneous change of focus. The artist who emphasizes both the face and the boot-laces, therefore, is merely pandering to the popular idea. My theory, be it right or wrong, is suggested by that favourite subject for an essay in colleges of learning, "Can you think of two things at the same time?" to be triumphantly answered by the undergraduate in his statement that he could attend to the Sunday sermon while thinking of last Saturday's cricket.

Another point to remember is that an object which attracts the eye, say the beautiful bright green of a distant turnip field amid the russets of autumn, may be a positive detriment instead of an addition to your sketch unless kept subdued in colour. Note also that the distant turnip field is like John Leech's "Swell"—not so green as it looks. Hold up a leaf against the field and you will see for yourself. Your vision may be attracted by a white gate in the middistance; but when you come to the drawing you discover that it occupies an infinitesimal

PLATE 3.—A SPRING DAY (13 × 9 INCHES).

part of your paper, and is no feature in your sketch.

In seeking a subject curb your ambition. An artist entitles his picture "A Grey Day," or "The Lonely Road," not "The Valley of the Spey from Craigellachie." The selection of complicated landscapes is the besetting sin of you and me. We have not cultivated the power of selection, and we are led astray by the countless attractions of nature. We see too much and know not what to omit. The choice is more difficult for us than for the artist, as he knows from experience what he can paint, and can take liberties with the scene before him. On the other hand, the beginner should paint what he sees, and must therefore take care to see a suitable subject. Before you begin work try to settle in your mind what are the outstanding characteristics you want to present: is it an effect of sunshine or of gloom? what are the principal masses which compose to form a picture? or is it the combination of certain lines? As I have said we see too much, and you should half close the eyes—or look through your spectacles in place of over the top—till you get into your mind the general effect of masses and light and shade.

We are told that the early water-colour painters were fostered by landed proprietors employing them to paint their country seats. The painting of "homes," be they grand or

humble, is a pursuit which appeals to the amateur. Many a pleasant souvenir of a visit may be left behind to the delight of the hostess. All homes are not picturesque, but often an artistic sketch of even an unattractive building or part thereof can be made if a suitable vantage ground is selected. The worst of painting known subjects is that exact topographical accuracy is expected, and the suppression of the pantry window is not lightly overlooked.

I have also derived great pleasure from painting gardens, subjects which appeal to the amateur. They have the advantage of lying near at hand. As you stroll about you can select a vista or patches of colour which compose well, and transfer them to your paper when time or opportunity offers.

To avoid mannerisms it is a great thing to vary the choice of subjects: one day a stretch of sand or flat country with cumulus clouds; another a study of houses or buildings; another of a landscape with trees; another the interior of a stable or cowhouse; or again, when you are more advanced, the edge or interior of a wood with complicated tree trunks and branches —but try to get a peep of sky into the sketch.

VALUES.

THE characteristic of a beginner's work is that it is flat and uninteresting. This arises from the fact that he has failed to grasp the principles of "values"—that is, the relation of the strength of one part of the picture to the strength of the other parts. There should be a principal high light and a principal deep accent, the rest of the work being filled with intermediate tones.

This is the ruling principle which should be embedded in your memory. "Keep your eye on the values" should be the guiding rule for the painter as much as "Keep your eye on the ball" for the golfer.

When I halt before a view the first question I ask myself is "Where is your dark mass?" Without this I know the drawing will never make a picture. Before you can make any progress you must grasp this principle. You can best do so by taking a very simple subject such as an archway formed to allow a ditch or brook to cross a road, the arch being in deep shadow and the side in bright light. Keep your side light and your arch dark in your sketch as in

nature, and you will not only be surprised at the result, but will learn much of use to you for more ambitious subjects. If there are no conduits in your country you can experiment with a dog kennel in a strong light. What you want to get into your head is that there will be no "light" in your sketch unless you have a "dark," and a good deep one. Of course I am aware that there are such subjects as "A Grey Day," but keep that for later. First memorize the idea of the principal dark.

Seize every opportunity of studying paintings or reproductions with a view to noting how well-known artists distribute the light and shade in their works to produce the effect. The dark or light accents may respectively cover most of the paper, or may be confined to a small point of light or dark. The deep accent may be in juxtaposition to the high light, or may be separated from it by intermediate tones.

If you expect raptures from your friends you must produce a sketch with "an effect." I well remember when I was a boy being told by an old artist to go to a ruined castle and paint the circular dovecot against a thunder cloud, as he had done in a sketch he showed me. This I did—and I did not spare the indigo in the imaginary storm! The object of my old friend—though he did not put it in so many words, for he was an artist and not an amateur—was to impress upon me the

necessity of studying values or effects. Perhaps his method of imparting the instruction was not sound, for all beginners, if they are to make progress, must paint what they see, and not attempt to paint supposititious storms on a sunny day. This makes the choice of a subject much more difficult for the amateur than for the experienced artist, who can select from the landscape before him what he requires for his picture. If the amateur begins to leave out parts of the landscape before him, or to introduce other objects, he gets hopelessly lost. I do not mean that he should not omit a factory chimney, but if he begins rearranging nature the result will be that he will find nature is more powerful than he is and will not stand the liberties he takes.

All this points to the desirability of selecting a subject which not only composes properly, but which has a decided shadow and a marked high light, and often you must be prepared for wearing the soles off your shoes and for much disappointment in the quest. If you cannot find what you want you can make a study of a bit of fence, a tree, or some docks or other weeds. It is a mistake to sit down to paint a view if you do not feel inspired. As an amateur of parts once remarked to me, "It is much more difficult to find a subject than to paint it when found." If it is a dull day with absence of light and shade try a sketch in a wood.

ON DRAWING.

WHEN elementary amateurs say they "simply loathe the drawing," they mean thereby that they strongly object to the usual outlining of the masses with lead pencil preparatory to painting. Their attitude of mind is that of Robert Louis Stevenson describing his boyish attempts at the colouring of theatrical engravings. "I cannot deny," he writes, "that joy attended the illumination . . . with crimson lake and Prussian blue a certain purple is to be compounded which, for cloaks especially, Titian could not equal." The elementary amateur prefers the "Twopence Coloured" to the "Penny Plain"!

We are so used in pencil drawings and etchings to the conventional representation of masses by the drawing of black lines giving the boundaries of the masses, that many people are ignorant of the fact that these black lines do not exist in nature. The blue sky stops and the white cloud begins without any black line of demarcation. The white horse against the brick wall is not confined by any black outline of circumvallation. If you are suf-

ficiently expert to paint as much of the red wall as you can see, the white horse will stand before you ready to be completed by the addition of any necessary shading. What you have to grasp is that what you see in nature are masses of colour of various shapes and sizes, and if you can draw and paint these masses with the brush it is needless to waste a penny on a pencil or a similar sum on a piece of india-rubber. But I think I hear you saying "How about the black line under the eaves of the house?" Euclid tells us a line is length without breadth, and that which you think is a dark line is really a narrow dark *mass* varying in width as the sun rises or sinks in the sky.

From the foregoing remarks you will realize that the pencil is not an invention of a bad but of a good fairy for your special aid and assistance in the later stages of painting. These pencil lines are born to blush unseen, and to be obliterated by coats of paint. Many artists dispense with pencil drawing beyond mere indications of outline, but this course is not to be recommended for you or me. Not only should you draw the outline of a tree, but you should indicate the principal masses of foliage and the chief branches. As you gain experience you will learn what you require to draw to help you in the later stages.

If you cannot draw you must learn to do so before you get a paint-box. It is one of

the great drawbacks to being an elementary amateur in place of an elementary art student that we have not had an opportunity of drawing from cones, plaster casts, or the human figure as they do at art schools. It accordingly is the result that those amateurs who can draw do so because they have a natural aptitude for drawing. If they do not possess this they must learn to draw.

For be it noted that outlining is only a part, and a small part, of drawing. Your whole sketching consists of drawing with the pencil or the brush. Every touch of the brush must have relation to drawing of forms and gradations much more difficult than the mere outlining. Sit down with a field before you and with the brush try to draw the variations and curves of the slopes, and you will realize what you have missed in not attending life classes where they paint people " mid nodings on " !

PLATE 4.—THE POST OFFICE, CORNHILL-ON-TWEED (14 × 10 INCHES).

HINTS ABOUT PERSPECTIVE.

You will notice I have not headed this Section "Perspective." Firstly, because I cannot pretend to an intimate acquaintance with the many intricate rules; and secondly, because, if I had so headed it you would have skipped the following paragraphs. Nor could you be blamed if you had, for anything more tiresome than an ordinary work on perspective has yet to be invented. The writers are very solemn gentlemen and furnish you with diagrams of everything except what you want to sketch, and, moreover, these diagrams are invariably on another page from the letterpress; while, to make the confusion worse confounded, the printer either misplaces letters on the plates or omits them altogether. The study of perspective has, therefore, fallen from its high estate when it was recommended as a popular pastime for "young ladies and young gentlemen."

I am seeking to address those who have lacked the opportunity—and possibly the inclination—to master the intricacies of the principles. Most artists will tell you they

know little about perspective, but draw what they see. I am, however, satisfied that a general idea of the rules must prove of service to any serious sketcher. So to work !

If you were to sit down at a window and, keeping the eye perfectly steady, were to draw on the glass with a brush and black paint the outlines of the buildings outside, the resultant drawing would be in perfect perspective. In other words, perspective is the representation on a flat surface, such as paper, of the objects as seen in nature by the eye. The perpendicular surface is technically called the *picture plane*. In the following notes I shall refer to it as the *window*, as if the outlines of the external objects were drawn on the glass. I shall also assume that the ground of the landscape is level—except where otherwise stated—or, in other words, lies at right angles to the *window*.

For our purpose we may divide the subject into (*a*) Parallel Perspective, (*b*) Angular or Oblique Perspective, and (*c*) Sloping Perspective.

Parallel Perspective.

On Fig. 2 you will find a cube and a brick drawn in parallel perspective. Both objects have their front sides parallel to the *window ;* and the top and bottom lines of the front and all other lines which are parallel to the *win-*

dow remain parallel in the drawing, even if these lines were produced to infinity. Thus, if you were drawing a factory chimney 100 feet high, which did not taper but was actually as wide at the top as at the bottom, you would represent it as of the same width throughout.

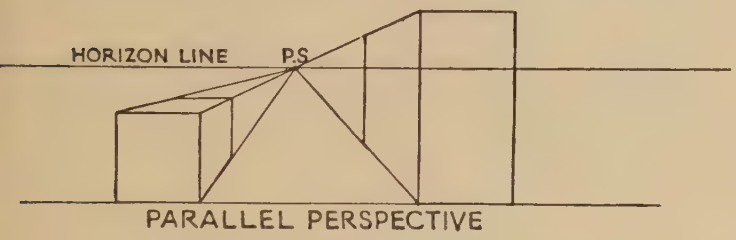


FIG. 2.

If it had fallen to the ground without breaking in such a position as to be parallel to the window, it would not be represented as tapering in any way.

You will, however, notice that the lines running away from you, and which in nature are parallel to the ground and at right angles to the *window*, slope upwards or downwards, and if continued meet in a point. This point is the *point of sight* (P.S.) and is situated on the *horizon line* (H.L.), being an imaginary line stretching across the *window* on the level of the eye. The point of sight is the point on the horizon line opposite to your eye. If you raise your eye by standing up, the H.L. and P.S. rise. If you sit down again they

fall, and the lines converging at the P.S. vary accordingly. In parallel perspective all lines which actually are at right angles to the *window* if above the H.L. slope down to that line and meet or vanish at P.S.; if below the H.L. they slope up to the H.L. and again meet at P.S. In parallel perspective P.S. is the *vanishing point* of all lines at right angles to the *window*. It thus follows that if both sides of a street are in fact parallel the receding lines meet at P.S., as you will gather from looking at Figs. 2 and 6.

Angular Perspective.

In the preceding explanations we were studying a cube and a brick, sides of which were parallel to the *window*. Now let us turn them slightly so that a corner of each

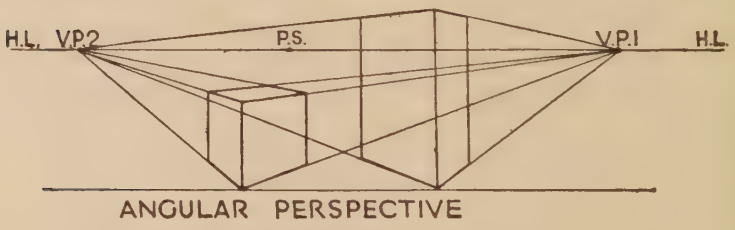
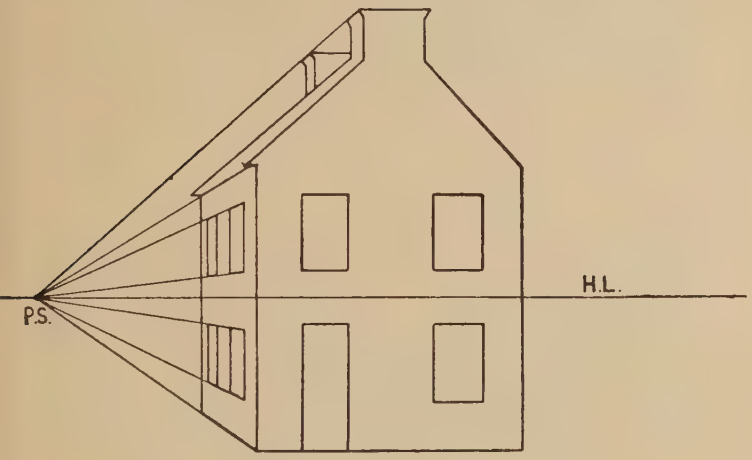


Fig. 3.

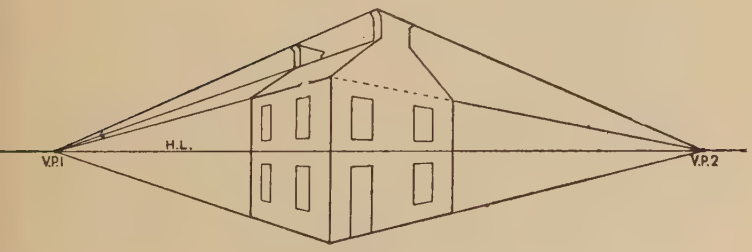
is nearest the *window*—or, in other words, let us look at them at an angle and see what the result is. If you refer to the delineation of the objects in Fig. 3 you will see that all the

lines of the sides of the objects which are parallel to the ground converge at points on



PARALLEL PERSPECTIVE

FIG. 4.



ANGULAR PERSPECTIVE

FIG. 5.

the H.L., but that these vanishing points are not at P.S. but at other points on H.L., marked V.P.1 and V.P.2 on Fig. 3. In

parallel perspective all objects have *one* vanishing point, which is the point of sight. In angular perspective every cubical object has *two* vanishing points, neither of which is (except by accident) the point of sight. In

FIG. 6.

both parallel and angular perspective all V.P.'s are on the H.L.

In Figs. 4 and 5 you will find the same house drawn in parallel and angular perspective respectively, while Figs. 6 and 7 afford examples of more complicated drawings. A study of these diagrams will help to an understanding of the principles much more than the perusal of many pages of printing.

SLOPING PERSPECTIVE.

Let us next erect a roof on the top of the

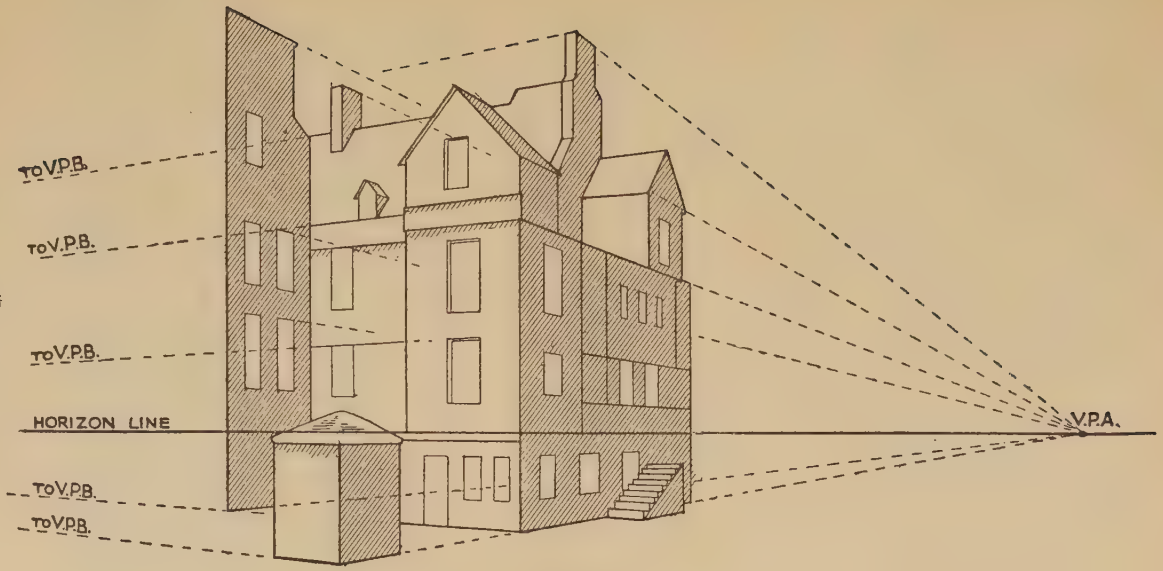
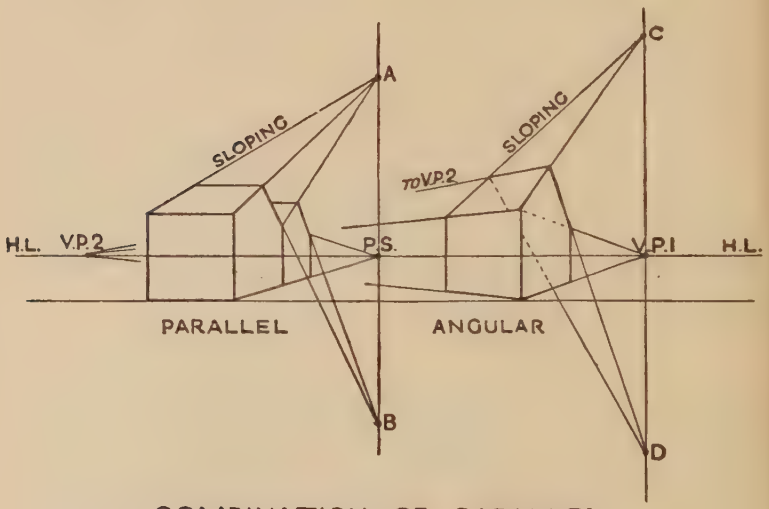


FIG. 7.

cube and the brick so as to give them the rough similitude to houses, Fig. 8. You will realize that the *window* and the upright sides of the brick and the cube are perpendicular to the ground—which I still assume to be level—but that the roofs are not so perpendicular,



COMBINATION OF PARALLEL ANGULAR AND SLOPING PERSPECTIVE

FIG. 8.

but slope at an angle to the *window*. The lines of the ridges and eaves of the roofs, which are parallel to the ground, go to the vanishing points on the horizon line as before explained, but the sloping lines of the gables go to accidental vanishing points, with the result that

the delineation of the roof shows that the line of the ridge is shorter than the line of the eaves. The accidental V.P. is always in a line drawn at right angles to the H.L. through one of the V.P.'s of the object.

Although roofs afford the most common examples of sloping perspective which you are likely to encounter, you will realize that any planes which are not horizontal or are not perpendicular to the level ground are governed

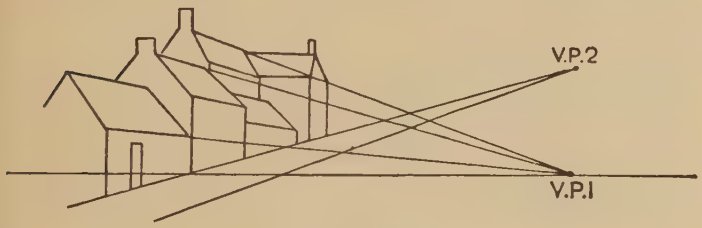


FIG. 9.

by the same rules. Thus, in Fig. 9, the houses stand at the side of a sloping road, and you will note that, while the lines of the buildings still vanish in the horizon line, the vanishing point of the road is above the H.L. and immediately over the V.P. of the buildings.

I can now imagine you telling me the story of the medical student who in his examination was unable to answer any of the questions on Sanitary Science, and protested to his examiners that he thought there must have been some mistake as he wanted to be a doctor

and not a plumber. Similarly you are doubtless feeling that the foregoing treatise on cubes and bricks is more suited to what we used to call a kindergarten, or to a mathematical class, than to be helpful to you who desire to become an artist. Let us therefore apply ourselves to considering how the above principles can be made use of in practice.

If you are seated looking up a street, hold up your pencil horizontally—that is, parallel to the ground—till it is in a line with and covers a series of lines in the houses parallel to the ground and not sloping up or down. This gives you the horizon line of the scene. Draw a corresponding horizontal line on your paper. And here I may note that, if you are in front of a view which has no visible horizon line, sit or stand with your head erect, hold a card or your sketch-book horizontally in front of your eye so that you can only see the near edge of the card or book and not its sides. That edge will cover the horizon line.

Having found the horizon line again hold up your pencil to cover a series of lines—say the eaves—of the houses sloping down to the horizon line. Note where this new line crosses the horizon line you have already discovered. This point is the point of sight (P.S.) at which all the receding lines of the houses will vanish. Mark the P.S. on your paper and draw a line at the same angle as that taken by the slanting pencil. Follow the same procedure with

reference to a line sloping upwards to the horizon, and when you draw it you will find it likewise terminates at the P.S. Repeat the process with reference to the other side of the street. You then have a series of lines on your paper all terminating at the P.S., which gives you the lines of the base of the houses, eaves, etc., and the angles at the top and bottom of the windows, etc., can be got by drawing intermediate lines from the P.S. You can then subdivide the space between the angles formed by the lines terminating at P.S. by drawing perpendicular lines to mark the subdivisions of the houses, doors, windows, etc. If you have not followed what I mean, look again at Fig. 6.

The horizon line is supposed to be on a level with your eye. It accordingly follows that, if you are sitting below the level of the street, the horizon line will be lowered and the lines above it terminating at P.S. will slope downwards at more acute angles. If, on the other hand, your sketching station is on a height, the H.L. will be raised, and if your height is considerable, *all* the lines of the street may slope upwards to P.S.

It is very useful to take a reproduction of a photograph of a street—for example, a picture post card—find the H.L. and P.S. as above indicated, and draw with a pencil the various lines converging at P.S. in Parallel Perspective, or at the various vanishing points if in Angular Per-

spective. Also, as you walk along a street, look out for the H.L. and V.P.'s and note the angles of the lines of the buildings. You will find these angles very deceptive. Thus, if the next time you are at a concert in the Music Hall, and are sitting in the first circle, you will find it very difficult to realize that the great beams of the roof vanish at a point opposite you at the back of the platform. Test the fact by holding up the edge of your programme and you will find they do so vanish.

I believe you can buy a simple instrument, consisting of two bars hinged like a carpenter's rule, which you can hold up so as to cover a vertical and a horizontal line of the house, which gives the true angle to be transferred to your paper. A pair of dividers would serve the same purpose, or even your half-opened pen-knife. But remember that in making use of any of these aids the pencil or dividers must be held *parallel* to the *window* or you will not get the correct angle.

This is all comparatively simple, but it is not usual in the best artistic circles to paint Brick Lane, consisting of two parallel rows of similar simple dwellings standing on absolutely level ground. The soul longs for the picturesque, and the proper drawing of the picturesque unfortunately involves a knowledge of further rules. In the first place, the street may not be of one level whether horizontal, sloping upwards or downwards, but may

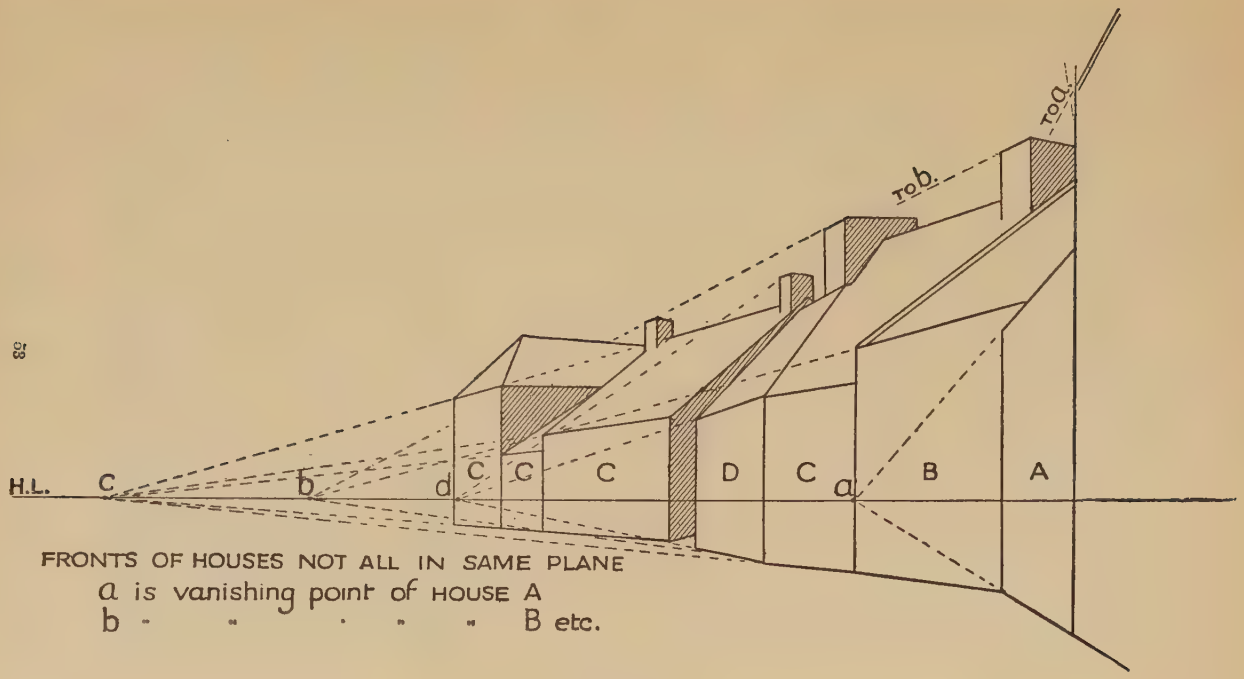

to a.
to b.
H.L.
C
b
d
C
C
C
D
C
a
B
A
FRONTS OF HOUSES NOT ALL IN SAME PLANE
a is vanishing point of HOUSE A
b " " " " " B etc.

FIG. 10.

be level for a bit then slope upwards for some distance and then dip downwards, or may be varied in many ways. Again, the buildings may not be parallel to one another, but may all be built at different angles.

If you look at Fig. 10, you will see that the fronts of the houses are not on the same plane and have no fewer than four vanishing points. Every V.P. is situated on the H.L. (or, in some cases, on a continuance of it beyond the limits of the paper), and the V.P. of any particular house can be found approximately by holding the pencil before the eye as already described. Every one is, of course, aware that a more distant object appears smaller than the same object nearer the eye. Thus, windows in a row not only decrease in height as they become more distant, according to the rules already indicated, but they also decrease in width. The relative perspective widths of any windows can be determined with mathematical accuracy, and the study of these rules is very interesting. But for most drawings you and I are likely to tackle, such extreme accuracy is not of supreme importance, as long as the principle is kept in view, and indicated in the drawing.

You have no doubt found great difficulty in drawing the gable of a house in such a way as to appear upright. Gables have a way of asserting their relationship with the Leaning Tower of Pisa of blessed memory. The

explanation of this tumble-down appearance is, that you have not found the true central vertical line of the gable. I suddenly discovered by my own researches that by drawing two cross lines on the gable, as in Fig. 11, I got the central upright line which gave me the pitch of the gable. Fig. 12 shows the same principle applied to a pointed arch. I later found that others had made the same dis-

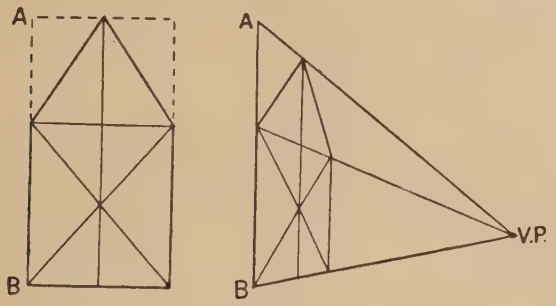


FIG. 11.

covery as myself, and that the employment of " diagonals " is well known in treatises on Perspective. I recently picked up in the penny box of a second-hand bookshop, a copy of *The Artist's Assistant in Drawing, Perspective, etc., containing the Easiest and most Comprehensive Rules for the Attainment of those truly Useful and* POLITE ARTS, *Methodically digested, And adapted to the Capacities of Young Beginners; Illustrated with Suitable Examples engraved on Copper.* My find consisted of

"The Third Edition, Improved," published by Robert Sayer in 1772. In the preface the nameless author stated that the reader would find the addition of a very useful problem in the article on Perspective, illustrated by a new plate. On turning to that portion of the little work, I found the problem was, "To find the Center for the Roof of a House, in an oblique View," and answer was given in the

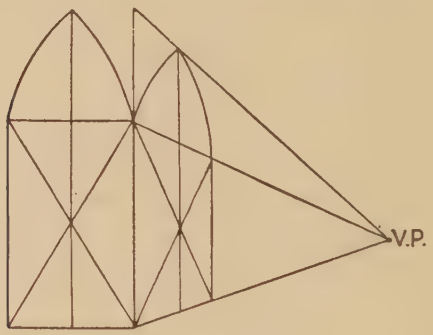


FIG. 12.

new plate, which was a representation of a gable as I have shown above. "Great minds run on the same lines."

In Fig. 13 you will see how the subdivision of the front of a house can be made by diagonals with a view to the correct placing of the door and windows. The line A is first found by the above method. The line A gives the centre of the house, and in the same way the position of the lines B and C

can be obtained, dividing the front of the house into four equal widths seen in perspective.

If you study works on perspective you will find that the recognized method of finding the position of doors and windows, or determining, say, the proper relative positions of a row of columns, is by means of what are called "measuring points," but for practical sketching they are beyond the pale. My friends the diagonals afford a rough-and-ready method

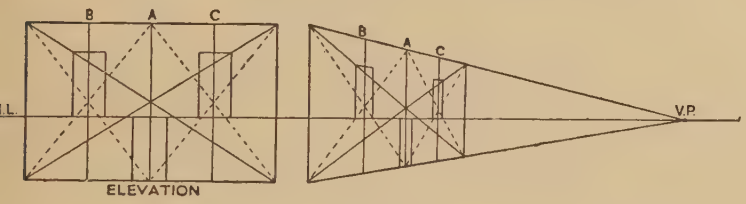


FIG. 13.

of determining the position of points. It is quite useful to study one of these miniature greenhouses called, I believe, "Wardian Cases," in which our grandmothers used to sentence ferns to lifelong imprisonment. It shows how the perspective lines run although you cannot see them in an opaque building. In working out problems you will find useful a quarto notebook ruled in squares, such as children use for sums, and some sheets of grease-proof paper, used for wrapping up sandwiches, which can be used as tracing paper. You can make a rough

drawing on the squared paper which facilitates measurements and square angles, and you can then trace a clean drawing on the sandwich paper.

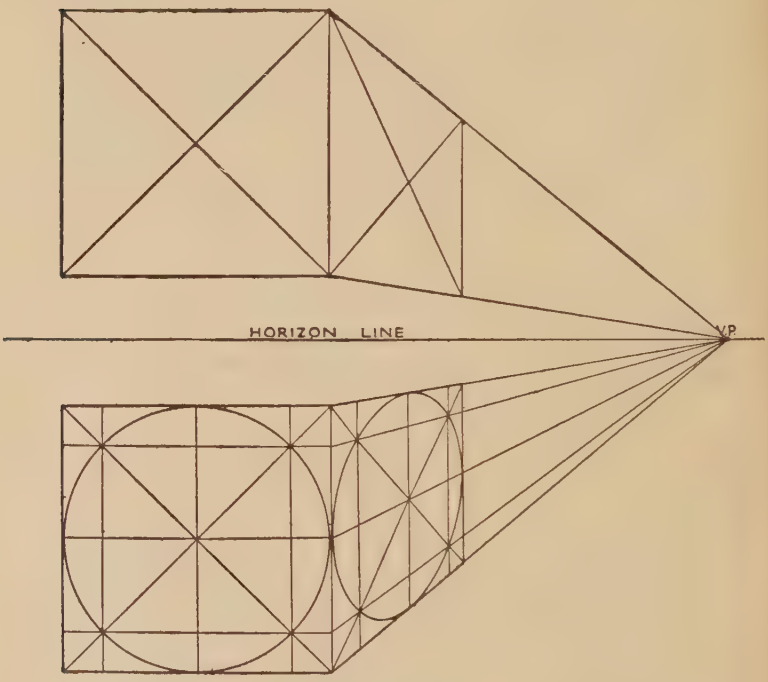


FIG. 14.

You will now have gathered that the object of these notes is not to suggest that the student bent on sketching should proceed with an array of drawing-boards, T-squares, and compasses, but to outline some of the elementary rules of

perspective without the observance of which the drawing will not look right. If you grasp the principle that the vanishing points are on the horizon line which is on a level with the eye,

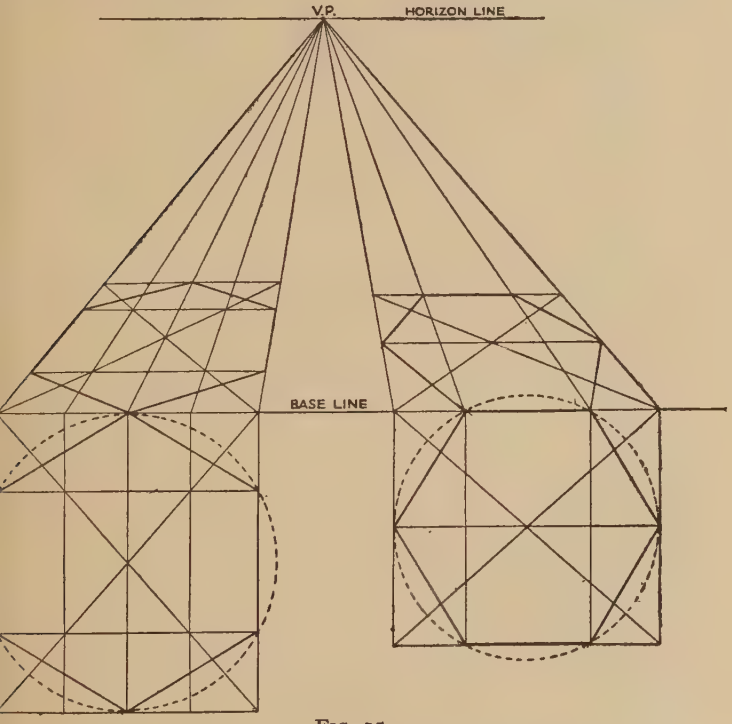


FIG. 15.

and know how to use diagonals for subdividing a perspective plane to find the central vertical line of an arch or gable and for countless other purposes, you should not stray so very far from

truth. If you want to draw the inside of Westminster Abbey you must go to another master.

There are some other practical matters connected with perspective which you may find of use. Say you want to draw in perspective a cart wheel, a rounded arch, the octagonal or hexagonal base of a sundial or a church spire you get into more complicated problems. With a view to your assistance I now submit some diagrams. If you look at Figs. 14 and 15 you will see that each of the representations of figures is drawn alongside a plan of that figure which is subdivided by diagonals or other straight or curved lines. Adjoining the plan the same figure is drawn in perspective. In Fig. 14 we start with two squares, one above and the other below the horizon line. The diagonals of the upper square give you the centre of that square in perspective. In the lower square a circle is described. Note where the other lines are drawn which enable the circle to be drawn in perspective. The circle becomes an ellipse and its perspective form is very unlike anything you would be likely to draw by eye. This circle may become the basis of a wheel of a dogcart. In Fig. 15 is shown how you can draw a hexagon, whether one of the corners or one of the sides are towards you, and you thus can get the base of, say, a summer-house. Figs. 14 and 15 are in parallel perspective. Fig. 16 gives a hexagon drawn in angular perspective, and is more complicated and difficult. In this

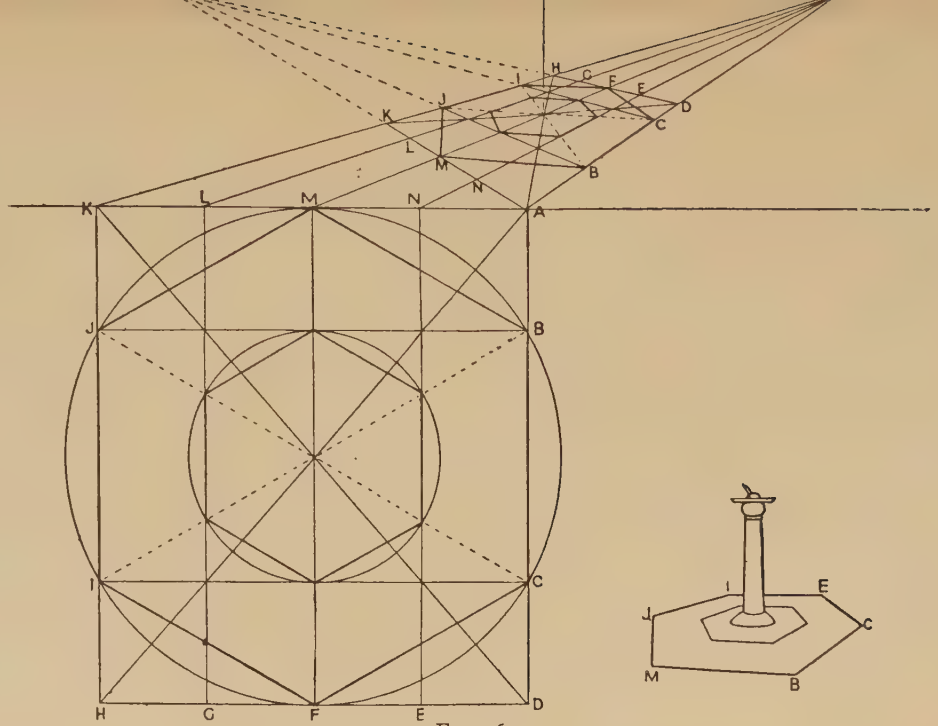


FIG. 16.

case I have deviated from my practice in troubling you with letters, which I hope will enable you to find in the drawing the corresponding points in the plan.

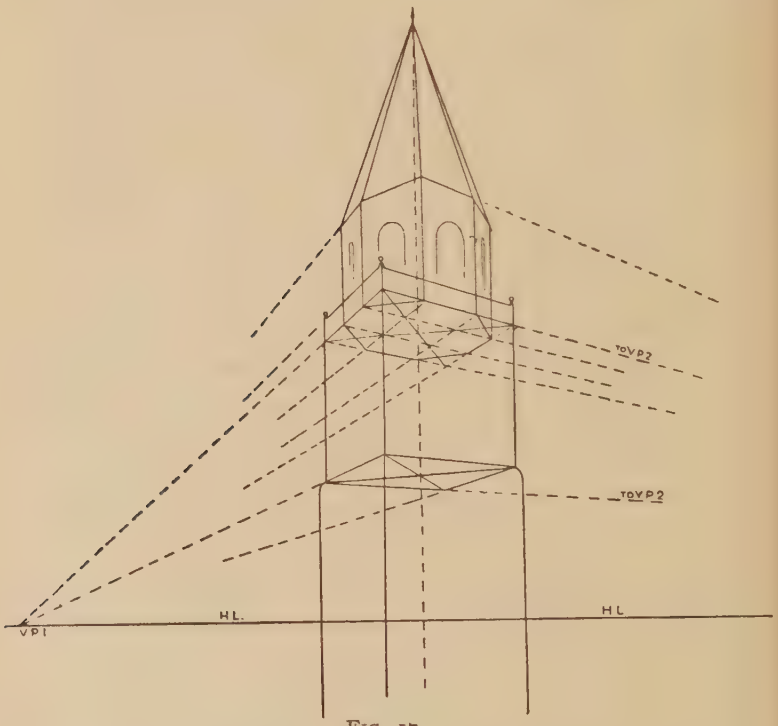


FIG. 17.

Fig. 17 presents a church spire, square below and octagonal above. The practical point about this drawing is that it shows you how to find the centre axis of a spire by means of diagonals.

Lack of knowledge of this accounts for the tendency of so many spires to have an intoxicated appearance.

Combined Perspective.

It is obvious that all sketches of houses combine parallel or angular perspective with sloping perspective, the latter applying to the roofs. Indeed, all three kinds of perspective may be required in the true delineation of a group of buildings. If the ground slopes upwards or downwards the result is that the road or street running away from you has a different vanishing point not on the horizon line, although the lines of the buildings still vanish at a point in the horizon line.

Let us look at Fig. 18, drawn from a photograph of one of those steep streets in Edinburgh from which, as R. L. Stevenson writes, you can see ships tacking for the North Sea. The horizon line is the sea-level at the shores of Fife seen in the far distance. The horizontal lines of the buildings converge to the point of sight on the horizon line, while the lines of the roadway, foot pavements, railings, lamp-posts, and figures, which are all affected by the downward hill, vanish at V.P. directly, but far below.

Now turn to Fig. 19, which represents another steep street in Edinburgh, looking up the hill. At the cross street near the statue the ground slopes down and is hidden from view

till it rises again towards the distant spires. Note in this case how the horizon line (that is, the line on the level of your eye) is near the foot of the drawing, and how the building lines vanish at P.S. while the roadway and line giving the height of the figures goes to a vanishing point directly above the P.S.

I have looked at a number of books on Per-

FIG. 18.

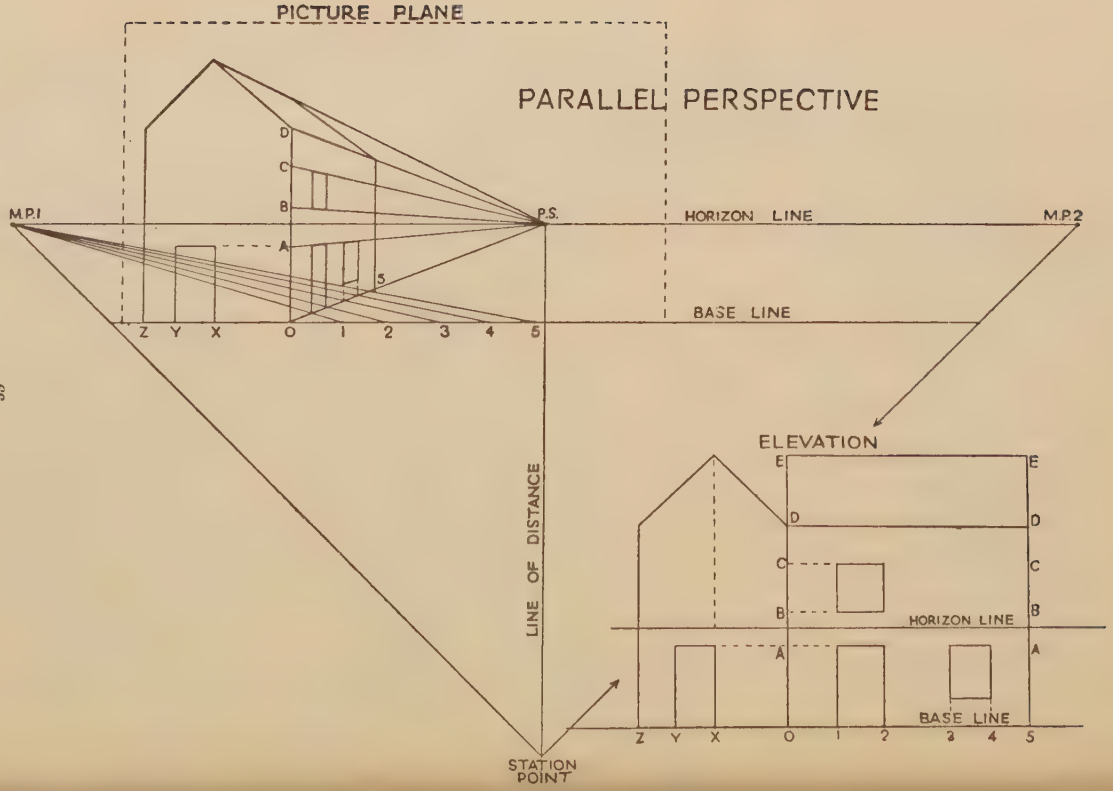
spective and have searched in vain for one giving a clear and easily followed statement of the rules. The clearest work I have chanced to encounter is *Elementary Lessons in Perspective*, by the late Mr. George Straton Ferrier, R.S.W., a well-known artist and teacher. Copies, I understand, can still be obtained from Messrs. Geo. Stewart & Co., 92 George Street, Edinburgh, for a few shillings. It brings out the salient points useful

to an amateur, the only objection to it being the unnecessarily large size of the pages. If you have to fall back on one of the ordinary treatises I should advise you to draw the diagrams of the

FIG. 19.

various problems as the simplest way of mastering them.

When I had practically concluded my researches I came across Mr. Rex Vicat Cole's recently published *Perspective as applied to Pictures*. This is a delightful work, with countless

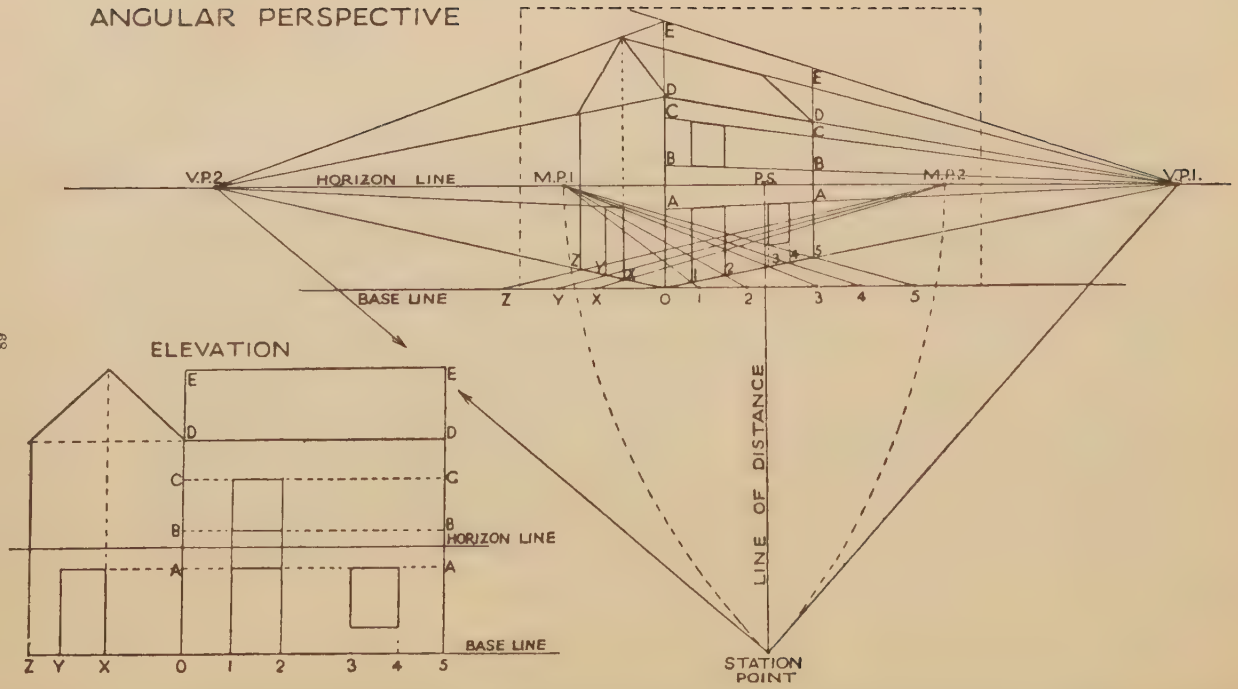

PICTURE PLANE
PARALLEL PERSPECTIVE
M.P.1
P.S.
HORIZON LINE
M.P.2
BASE LINE
D
C
B
A
S
Z Y X 0 1 2 3 4 5
LINE OF DISTANCE
ELEVATION
E
D
C
B
A
HORIZON LINE
BASE LINE
Z Y X 0 1 2 3 4 5
STATION POINT

Parallel Perspective.

The Picture Plane corresponds to the plane described as " the window " in the previous pages. It rests on the Base Line. The Point of Sight (which in this case is not in the centre of the Picture Plane) is the point on the Horizon Line opposite the Station Point, or position of the observer's eye. The position of P.S. above the Base Line corresponds to the height of the eye above the Base Line. The line running from the Station Point to P.S. is called the Line of Distance, and is assumed to run at right angles to the Picture Plane, although necessarily drawn flat in the diagram.

The problem is to draw in Parallel Perspective the house of which the elevation is given.

The gable is erected without alteration on the Base Line. The height of the house O D is the same as on the elevation in Parallel Perspective. The lines, O–P.S. and D–P.S., give the angles of the ground line and eaves of the house. The width of the front of the house, and of the door and windows, is got by marking on the Base Line the position of the points on the elevation numbered 1 to 5, and by drawing lines from these points to the measuring point, M.P.1. Thus the distance, O to 5 on the line O–P.S., is the correct perspective length of O to 5 on the Base Line. In Parallel Perspective, each of the measuring points is the same distance from P.S. as P.S. is from the Station Point. The angle M.P.1–Station Point–M.P.2, is a right angle. M.P.2 would be the measuring point of lines running to P.S. from an object to the right of the line of distance.


ANGULAR PERSPECTIVE
V.P.2
HORIZON LINE
M.P.1
P.S.
M.P.2
V.P.1.
BASE LINE
Z Y X 0 1 2 3 4 5
E D C B A
ELEVATION
HORIZON LINE
BASE LINE
LINE OF DISTANCE
STATION POINT

Angular Perspective.

Here the same house is again to be represented, this time in Angular Perspective. Consequently there are two Vanishing Points. To find these points, sketch the line O 5 and continue it till it cuts the Horizon Line at V.P.1. Draw the line from V.P.1 to the Station Point, and from the latter point draw the line to V.P.2 at right angles to the line V.P.1–Station Point. This gives the second Vanishing Point at V.P.2. Draw the line V.P.2–O, which gives you the position of the base of the gable. With centre V.P.1, and radius V.P.1–Station Point, draw the arc cutting the Horizon Line at M.P.1 ; this gives the first measuring point. Similarly with V.P.2 as centre and V.P.2–Station Point as radius, describe the other arc, which gives the second measuring point. By setting off the measurements on the base line as explained in the Parallel Perspective diagram, and drawing lines to the respective measuring points as shown, you get the perspective width of the front and gable, and the positions of the doors and windows. Note that the top peak of the gable is not as high as E on the elevation, as the peak is behind the Picture Plane, which is only touched by the line O E.

examples and hints. In fact, on reading it you might title it the *Romance of Perspective*. I have looked at so many books on perspective that I find it difficult to judge how a beginner could profit by Mr. Vicat Cole's work until he had mastered the prosaic elements of the subject.

Practical Drawing, by Mr. E. G. Lutz, contains useful hints on perspective as well as on other practical matters.

In the preceding pages I have tried to bring out the principles which in practice I have found to be useful, and I could have considerably extended this branch of the subject had space permitted. It rests with you to develop my suggestions still further. I have confined myself to elementary points with the knowledge that I have left the matter far from complete. On pages 66–69 you will find drawings of a house in Parallel and Angular Perspective, which show you how " measuring points " are found, and these diagrams you may find useful for reference.

PRACTICE.

THE peculiarity of painting in water-colours is that there are so many different methods. Are you going to paint on a dry paper or a wet paper? Is the paper to be white or tinted, or even brown paper? Are you going to put on all the colours in washes with little or no retouching, or are you going to do your painting and wash out most of it again with a sponge? Are you going to stipple, or are you going to let the colours run together when wet? Are you going to use body colour or are you not? Are you going to paint with a full brush or to leave an obvious pencil outline tinted by faint washes of colour? —these are some of the problems you are up against. All the methods have their disciples among artists, and drawings in these widely varying ways are carried to triumphant success.

As an amateur I vote for dry white paper as a surface.

The great aim and object you should have before you is to keep your colour clean. If you put on washes without retouching when wet, you can lift the colour with a sponge or brush, but not if you get the paint rubbed into the

texture of the paper. The ideal, no doubt, is to paint each part of the picture of its final strength in one wash or touch—*à premier coup*—but this is more easily said than done, though your effort should be directed towards that desirable attainment. What is easy for an artist of long experience is difficult or impossible for the beginner, and his painting is likely to have of paint as many skins as an onion. To reduce these to a minimum should be the endeavour, thus preserving the translucent quality of the white paper. This is particularly desirable in the shadows, where there is such a tendency to add coat after coat in place of one good "fat" one.

Don't dab with your brush, but try to put down the colour and leave it alone. Your sketch will be none the better but all the worse if you have had two or three shots at the same place.

Though your energies are directed to simplicity and as few coats as possible, this does not eliminate the possibility or even desirability at parts of the sketch of allowing the wet edges of different colours run together, thus producing softness and atmosphere. This is quite a different thing to letting all the colours run together after the manner of some; this in the case of the amateur being generally an ingenious device to conceal faulty drawing, and produce a pretty effect. If you are painting in the damp of evening you will find the colours will not

PLATE 5.—IN OUR GARDEN (14 × 10 INCHES).

dry, and that they run together do what you will. This may result in quite a truthful effect when hard details in nature are blended in the fading light. From experience gained at such times I have found that if you are painting a foreground tree not in full light accentuating sharply the divisions between the light and shadow parts, you can get a charming effect by soaking with water the tree you have painted and working among the wet colour introducing darker colours in the damp surface, and carefully drawing the outside edges with the brush. I mention this as showing how there is no finality in method, even if you are aiming generally at using clean washes.

You can also use your sponge or brush and water to remove parts which require alteration or softening. For this purpose some use a sponge brush, or tie a morsel of sponge to the stick of a brush with thread.

It may be taken as a rule that body colour is not to be used to cover up defects, but a bottle or tube of Chinese White is often of great assistance in putting in a figure or part of one, or a thin wash of it over the distance will make that part recede. With a touch of blue or grey it is also helpful in accentuating piercing lights of trees against the sky when these lights taken out with the brush have not yielded sufficiently pure points of light.

You will now have gathered that in a single sketch you may with advantage employ all the

different methods mentioned above. We draw the line at stipple—that is, producing the effect by dabs with the point of the brush. This is simply " not done " in the best circles. This form of execution received its death-blow from the members of that modern school whose virile style killed all stippled work within range on the walls of a gallery.

Ultimately you may try your hand on grey or other absorbent paper, but you only get one shot at it.

Having chosen your subject you erect your stool and sit upon it. You will probably find it easier to draw the outline with the sketching-board resting on your knee. If the board is thin fasten it to another board or a straw board with drawing pins or clips.

To enable you to decide upon the limits of the landscape and its position on your paper cut in a card the size of a post card an oblong opening corresponding in length and breadth to the size of your paper. Divide the top and bottom of this miniature frame into four equal parts, marking the three points with a pencil. Do the same with the sides. Then divide the margin of your paper in the same way. Hold the frame a short distance from the eye and look at the landscape through it, moving the frame about till you decide how much you are to include in your drawing. Note opposite which of the marks on the frame the horizon line and the principal objects come, and indicate

their position on your paper. If you stretch thin wires or thread across the frame this will make the operation still easier ; or you can take a small oblong piece of glass, make a cardboard frame for it, and scratch the lines on the glass with a diamond or glass cutter. Having marked these principal points indicate by faint lines the rough outlines of the masses. This can be done with charcoal, if you prefer, which can afterwards be dusted off the paper with a handkerchief, after you have drawn the lines with a pencil.

Now you are up against the drawing of your sketch, and the more time you spend in careful drawing the more time you will save at the later stages. This rule it is difficult to adhere to, so eager are you to get to the depicting of the changing colours, not to speak of the fact that your time is limited by prospect of the ringing of the luncheon bell at the appointed time.

Having completed your drawing you can erect your easel and get out your colour-box.

SKIES.

The recognized method of painting a sky adopted by beginners is to cover part of the area with blue, and to smear a purple tone over a portion of the white parts left. This is done without reference either to the natural history of clouds or the principles of composition.

The first point to grasp is that the sky becomes lighter as it approaches the horizon. Thus, in the case of a sky cloudless or with small clouds, you begin at the top of the sketch with a brush charged with cobalt reduced to the proper tone with water, gradually adding more water as you approach the horizon. The blue wash may be carried over the distance, thus tending to produce aerial effect. In making this wash begin at the left-hand top corner and sweep the brush straight across the paper. The next sweep is lower, taking up the edge of the first sweep and so on. If the paper is on an easel or held at a steep slope you should in beginning operations charge the brush with deeper colour than you might consider necessary, as the tone will be reduced by the colour gravitating down the paper. Also when the

rest of the painting is completed the blue will look lighter than it does when contrasted with the remainder of the white paper. In making these washes never retouch any portion till it is quite dry. It is no easy task to make these evenly gradated washes.

If you are to depict clouds it is desirable that they should, as far as in you lies, be made to resemble clouds formed by nature. There are clouds and clouds. For example, there are the cumulus clouds, like teased-out lumps of cotton wool, which in their exaggerated form become thunder clouds. The clouds in the evening become flattened out when the heat of the sun no longer draws them upwards, and are termed stratus clouds. There is also the rain cloud, the lowest of clouds, too well known in this climate to require description. The cirrus, locally known as "goat's-hair" or "fillies' tails," are the light streaky clouds, the highest in the atmosphere and not so affected by air currents—but not easy to paint.

As every one knows, the blue of the sky is caused by the particles of dust in the air, which reflect the blue rays but absorb the other colours. I have just looked this up in an Encyclopedia, so I know I am right. Therefore do not paint your sky as if its blueness were due to Mr. Ricketts. The clouds, on the other hand, are at no great height above the earth. They find Ben Macdhui in their way and aeroplanes soar above them. A cloud is lighted by the

sun, and the shadow part of a cloud is the portion farthest from the source of light just as it is in the case of an orange. The shadow part of the cloud or of the orange may be lightened by reflected light. These are the elementary points to note; but of course the orange differs from the cloud in the fact that the orange is opaque while parts of a cloud in most cases are translucent, which complicates the painting of the latter. Moreover, one cloud casts a shadow on another cloud as well as on the ground—creating transient effects of great beauty—in the same way as a tree casts a shadow on the earth. In painting a cloudy sky it is necessary to keep these elementary principles in view, and particularly to see that the clouds are lighted from the same side as the rest of your painting. If you have in hand a view in which you face the sun and there are heavy clouds, remark that the rays of light cannot penetrate the thick part of the clouds, and that these parts assume a browner tone surrounded by a translucent fringe of yellow or white. This is extremely difficult to paint, and for this reason I again emphasize the advice never to paint with the sun in your eyes —unless you are sure you can do it.

Another axiom is that there is perspective in skies just as there is on land—linear perspective as well as aerial perspective. The cloud no bigger than a man's hand above the distant hills is the twin brother of the great cloud above your head. Moreover, the lights and shadows of the

more distant clouds are modified by the atmosphere in the same way as the light and shade of a tree.

What you have to aim at is to paint the clouds as floating in the atmosphere and not as if they were cut out and pasted on blue paper. When your sketch is finished you should not look upon a cerulean wall but into infinity. A judicious softening of edges with the sponge may give a sense of motion.

The fact that clouds are full of movement and not stationary like trees suggests to the artist the possibility of harnessing them to his will and making them assume the proper place in his composition. If when you begin your painting you find that at the moment the position of clouds does not compose properly, you can proceed with another part of the sketch and wait until a different and more suitable arrangement presents itself. Then indicate the arrangement of the masses by some light pencil strokes and proceed with the painting of the clouds. Keep the effect of the cumulus clouds broad and do not overburden them with too much detail; but the drawing of the clouds must be good both as regards the edges standing out against the blue and the edges of the shadows. You should also get motion into them if you are representing fleeting clouds. Aim at simplicity in your skies, and don't get into your picture too many clouds which do not compose.

As you are walking abroad constantly watch

the clouds, and notice when they effectively group themselves with reference to the landscape. It is only in this way that you can acquire the knowledge of cloud form necessary to you if you want to work up a sky in your studio. Doubtless you, like all young artists in novels, live in a garret, and there is nothing to prevent you from this vantage point making studies of skies. I have sometimes sketched clouds from the window of a railway carriage.

LANDSCAPE.

HAVING got in your sky you now come to the earth and the fullness thereof. What I recommend you to do is to get the rest of the white paper covered with colour as soon as possible. If you don't do this the whiteness of the blank paper is a constant distraction. It may be desirable to advance or finish a portion of a sketch before you do the rest in order to catch some fugitive effect, but this is the exception not the rule. In advising you to colour the paper I do not mean that you should do this in a haphazard way, but carefully and thoughtfully with the final effect aimed at ever before you. Each part should be painted as nearly as possible its final strength. To attain this avoid the Scottish tendency of thinking that a pan of cobalt costs two shillings and a half pan of yellow ochre sixpence. In other words, don't spare your colours, but before you begin to paint mix a sufficient quantity of colour of due strength to complete the wash. You will find these washes much too light when you put in the dark portions later. It is therefore desirable to get in the shadows very early in the painting, which enables

you to gauge the proper values of the lighter parts when painting them. Remember that everything depends on the values of the different parts of the sketch. Without values your sketch is valueless in more senses than one. You have also to keep in view that the effect of sun in the landscape may be got as much by contrasting warm colours with cold as by light with dark. I find it very difficult not to keep the colours too cold. You probably will do the same.

A simple device is to cut some small holes in a post card. Hold it in front of you so that through one of the holes you can see, say, a field, and through another your painting of the same object. By contrasting the two spots of colour —yours and nature's—you will be able to judge whether your field is too light or too strong in colour—that is, whether your value is right—and also whether your colour is too warm or too cold.

What you have to do first is to get in the masses of light and shade, or, in other words, to get the general effect, before you bother about details. A small preliminary pencil sketch in your notebook may impress on your memory the effect you are striving after, and may help you to avoid wasting your time on details in a particular part of the painting where they are either useless or even hurtful.

If you are painting a subject which involves distance, mid-distance, and foreground, you have to keep before you that the distant colours

and details are modified in intensity by the intervening atmosphere, which gives the far-away objects a more blue tone. The light is less light and the dark less dark in the distance than in the foreground. In other words, the contrast between light and dark is not so great. When I got my first tin paint-box nearly fifty years ago I was told to use cobalt and yellow ochre in the distance, French blue and gamboge in the middle distance, and indigo and a brighter yellow in the foreground. An artist would probably laugh at these stereotyped rules and I do not pretend to have adhered to them. All the same they outline the idea which has to be carried out in practice, of using the less strong colours for the distance and the stronger and more decided colours in the foreground. This does not mean that the background is always to be light and the foreground dark in tone. As I write there are two photogravures on the wall in both of which the dark mass is in the middle distance.

If I set to work to remove the remains of a broken pane of glass from a window frame I do so with timid taps lest I break another pane. A glazier, on the other hand, gets boldly to work, for by experience he knows what force he can use. You in putting in your darks in your sketch are also timid. Don't be afraid; put them in boldly and set the key of the tones, or the standard of the scale of values.

It is fatal to sit on your stool all the time.

You must get back from your work occasionally and see how it looks from a distance. For this reason it is useful to have your easel high so that you can put touches on the drawing without stooping too much, and then walk backwards to see the effect.

TREES.

How often one hears from a beginner the despairing cry—" I simply can't paint trees." The difficulty experienced is not the inability to paint a particular tree—which may quite well happen—but *any* tree, and is due to the fact that the would-be artist has not grasped the elementary idea of what you see when you look at a tree. If you look at a tree in winter when it has no leaves you see that it consists of a trunk which splits up into branches, that these branches again break up into smaller branches, and these smaller branches into still more slender ones. These branches control the disposition of the leaves when summer again is nigh. Each parent branch which grows upwards, sideways, towards you, or downwards, carries a multitude of smaller branches or twigs bearing leaves, and these leaves group themselves into a general mass, with reference to what I have called the parent branch, while this general mass is again broken up into smaller masses attached to the lesser branches and twigs. If you look at an oak, which is characterized by decided and divergent branches, you will see that the foliage

breaks up into well-defined masses. These projecting masses are lighted by the sun, and they cast a shadow on the masses attached to the lower branches or upon part of these masses. You draw the light masses and colour them with the local colour, and represent the receding parts of the tree, not with a darker shade of the green you have used for the masses, but with a neutral colour composed of, say, French blue and raw sienna. This causes the part in light to come forward, and the part in shadow to recede. You apply the same process to each large light mass, breaking it up with a weaker neutral tint so as to represent the subdivision of the mass belonging to the smaller branches. Strive, however, to keep the effect broad and do not have too many subdivisions, making the work appear "niggly." Having done this you are not satisfied with your tree; you have to add the trunk and branches so far as visible. Now note particularly that in nature you only see the stem and branches of a massive tree against the shadow part of the tree or against the sky or distance. This last sentence should have been printed in red letters. How often in a beginner's work do you see the branches wandering aimlessly across the light masses which are intended to represent the foliage which conceal the branches from the eye. Add the branches in their proper place and you will be alike pleased and surprised to find that your tree is something like a tree—the masses coming for-

ward and the shadowed leaves and visible branches receding as in nature.

Many will doubtless think the foregoing simple facts are more suited to an infant school; but the failure to grasp them by those of more mature age is the explanation of the failure of countless elementary water-colour drawings. To disarm criticism, I may explain that I am well aware that, in feathery trees like the willow or the birch, the branches may be seen against, or through, the light parts, which are not solidly defined as in the case of an oak. The rule does not, of course, apply if you are painting with the sun in your eyes where the light shines through the translucent leaves and the opaque branches show against the light foliage.

At an early stage of your career as a landscape painter you will realize that there are many different kinds of trees, each with its own characteristic. The painting of an oak or an elm in the method I have indicated may be successful, but when you come to a birch, where the masses of light and shade are not so sharply defined, some modification is required. As there are not the sharp lines of demarcation between the light and shadow in nature, it follows that there should be a softening between the light and the shadow in your painting. You can gain this effect by running in the darkest portions while the light parts are still wet, or have been again

moistened with clean water. You may, however, find it easier to paint in the masses, light and dark, and then soften down the whole with a touch of the sponge, or scrape out portions with a knife. What is true of a birch is still truer of a willow, where the masses are even more flat, and may be imitated by dragging the side of a comparatively dry brush charged with darker colour across the original wash.

Paint your trees boldly and get the values. Never mind if you cover up piercing lights. You can take them out afterwards, and add the sprays of outer leaves.

No doubt an artist will tell you he does not paint a tree because it is *Quercus pedunculata* or *Salix alba*, but because it presents beautiful form and colour. It, however, possesses these qualities because it is a specimen of *Quercus* or of *Salix*, and if you cannot depict these characteristics, the reason for painting that particular object is lost.

When autumn comes and leaves fall, you see more of the branches, this process proceeding until the tree is bare. In drawing a tree bereft of leaves, the painter is faced with a new difficulty in painting the twigs showing against the sky or other background. To paint all these twigs is manifestly impossible, and the method adopted is to group them into masses by light washes of colour, these groups being bound together by drawing the

stouter branches. If these groups of branches are feathery, you can suggest them by colour dragged over the paper with the side of the brush. How to do this can be more easily learned at any exhibition by studying the method adopted by artists in their pictures than by any written description.

In selecting a tree for a sketch choose an old and mature one, and not a young one, which does not possess the grace or characteristics brought by age.

BUILDINGS.

Il va sans dire that there are buildings and buildings varying from cathedrals to hovels. Whatever type you select, the first essential is the drawing, and I would also respectfully draw attention to the preceding notes on perspective. In the painting, look out for colour in the stones, and at an early stage get in the shadows of their full strength to enable you to judge of the values of the walls. You will probably find considerable difficulty in painting tiles in a near roof, so as to indicate that they are tiles, without drawing every one. Remember that tiles and slates, as well as stones in a wall, are subject to the rules of perspective, and unless you obey these rules, the roof or wall will not look right. If you find the fronts of the cottages in a village street lack the picturesque, get into a backyard and see what you can find.

GARDENS.

THE artist will insinuate that gardens are not painted in the best artistic circles, but your reply will probably be that you have as much right to try to paint "the garden that I love" as he has to depict "Tristram and Isolde" or "The Charge of the Light Brigade." Gardens are not "easy stuff." On seeing some of my attempts an artist friend remarked, "It can be done," thereby implying—and helpfully implying—that in my case it had not come off.

One of the difficulties regarding such subjects is that, to be effective, careful drawing of individual plants is necessary, while the general effect must be kept broad. Some of the most popular painters of gardens find the former too easy and the latter too difficult. The illustrations by Miss Wilson, in *Scottish Gardens*, combine both breadth and drawing. I believe the originals were not water-colours but pastels, and although I know nothing of the latter art, I should imagine many flowers were easier to represent by flicking about chalk than by washing with a brush. Some

of the illustrations in Miss Margaret Waterfield's *Garden Colour* are also helpful. She has in many cases a happy knack of cutting off her sketch below the masses of flowers, without too much of the uninteresting groundwork of stalks and earth encumbered with pebbles or toads.

To be effective a garden scene must have masses of colour, not spots of colour as in a rose garden, which the gardener will try to entice you to paint. An ideal subject is a mass of delphiniums or poppies against a dark yew hedge. The flowers in nature stand away from the background and catch the light, whereas your representation is all on one plane—namely, the paper—and is all equally lighted. After much experimenting I have come to the conclusion that the true secret is to paint the garden in planes, as if arranged on the principle of stage scenery. Thus: first plane, the dark yew; second plane, the lupins against the yew; third plane, the saxifrage against the dark lower part of the lupins, and so on. Of course, I do not suggest that the flowers should be arranged like a regiment of soldiers, but that it is a great help if you can get darker masses to throw up the bright colours. A great difficulty in garden scenes is not to get the effect "spotty." Therefore, select simple groups of plants and avoid the formal garden.

THE SEA.

If you are making a sketch in which the sea is a feature, you come up against a new difficulty caused by the fact that the sea ebbs and flows. If, therefore, you sit down on the shore after breakfast and begin your sketch, when you return next day at the same hour to finish it you find the tide is an hour later. The effect you began the first day may not again present itself for several days, and by the time the effect is again suitable, several days may have elapsed, and you may be faced by expanses of sand in place of the blue ocean. This points to the desirability of making rapid sketches not occupying more than a few hours of a day.

Possibly in no branch of water-colour painting is a clean and decided touch necessary than in the painting of waves. By touching and retouching you lose the transparency of the water. Remember that the colour of shallow water is influenced by the sand shining through it, and the shadows of waves are also affected by the light reflected upwards from the trough in front.

It is a hugely difficult thing to try to paint waves breaking on a shore; the sea is as restless as a small boy. If you attempt a study, you should concentrate on the representation of a single big wave, not a host of little ones.

REFLECTIONS IN WATER.

THE beginner delights to make the reflections of the terrestrial objects in the bosom of the lake as nearly as possible the exact reduplication of these objects standing on their heads, and thinks himself extremely clever. To explain why he should not do so is the object of the following paragraphs.

The primary law of reflection is that the angle of incidence of a ray of light from any object on the reflecting surface is equal to the angle at which it is reflected from the surface to the eye. Thus, in Fig. 20(*a*), the ray of light from the top of the tower at A strikes the surface of the water YZ at B, and is reflected to the eye at O. The angle ABY is equal to the angle OBZ. Similarly in the case of a ray from the top of the tree nearer the edge of the bank, the angle MNY is equal to the angle ONZ. The ray which starts from A is reflected to the eye from B, and the eye sees A as if it were at *a*. In the same way it sees M as if it were at *m*.

The facts are clearly stated by Ruskin, in *The Elements of Drawing*, § 144, as follows:

"Suppose all the objects above the water *actually* reversed (not in appearance, but in fact) beneath the water, and precisely the same in form and in relative position, only all topsy-turvy. Then, whatever you could see, from the place in which you stand, of the solid objects reversed under the water, you will see in the reflection, always in the true perspective of the solid objects so reversed."

This being so you triumphantly say you

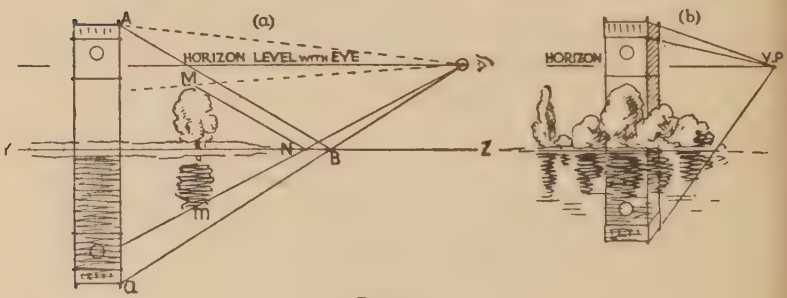


FIG. 20.

were quite right in making the reflection the counterpart of the natural objects. But that is where you are wrong. It applies, with certain limitations, to objects floating on the water—the swan, "half swan, half shadow," for example—or to objects on the brink of the water. But it does not apply to a collection of natural objects at varying distances from the water's edge. If you were to submerge yourself until your eye was on the level of the water and from that position you could see

the reflections, they would be the exact counterpart of the landscape. But from that position you could see no reflection. Your eye must be above the water, and from that elevated position you can see more of the tower than of the reflection thereof, as you will notice from following the continuations of the lines from the eye OM, O*m*. Note how much more of the reflection of the tower is shut out by the reflection of the tree than the actual tower is shut off by the real tree. The representation of the reflections will be as in Fig. 20(*b*). It follows that the higher the eye is raised above the water the less you will see of the reflected tower, and as the eye is lowered you will see more. The elevation of the eye also explains how you see the interior of the real boat, which is not represented in the reflection. If the boat were turned upside down beneath the water, you could not see the luncheon basket in the bottom of the boat.

You no doubt are thinking that this may be all very clever and interesting, but that in practice you would be sufficiently intelligent to notice how little of the reflection of the tower you could see compared to the real tower, and would have drawn it accordingly. This is what I should advise you to do. But there is a warning to be given lest you fall into a great error, as I myself have done.

Last summer I was sketching a placid mill-pond with some buildings and distant hill

reflected in it, the middle and nearer portions of the pond being covered with patches of reeds and sedges. These patches of herbage were thrown up by the dark purple of the hill being reflected in the intervening expanses of water. I so painted these dark reflections, and was quite pleased with the result; but on looking at the sketch in the privacy of my own chamber, I found there was nothing to account for these dark reflections, as, according to the laws of optics, the reflection of the highest point of the hill should have stopped many yards farther away; and, according to my drawing, the reflections among the water plants should have been of the blue sky and not of the hill. The explanation of this error was not that I had not seen the reflection of the hill at that part of the landscape, but that I had not correctly painted it, having drawn out the surface of the pond too much. But for these dark reflections the error in drawing would not have mattered.

Another point to be noted is that the depth of a reflection is not to be measured downwards from the base of the object, but from the point where that object would reach if carried down to meet the level of the water if continued under the object. In drawing anything at a distance from the margin of the water, you have, therefore, to think of the land as a floating island resting on the surface of the water. It is perhaps easier to understand the matter

by taking a mirror in place of water. As the mathematicians say: Let Fig. 21 represent a book resting on a horizontal mirror. On the book are a die and a bottle. The reflection of the end of the book is exactly the same depth as the real book which rests on the glass, but the depth of the reflection of the edge

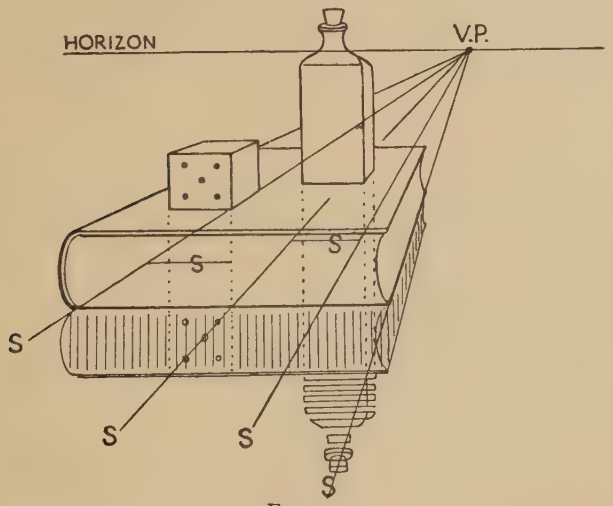


FIG. 21.

to the right is affected by the perspective, the perspective of reflections being controlled by the same laws as terrestrial objects. To settle the depth of the reflection of the bottle, you have to find the points on the glass under the bottle. I have endeavoured to indicate the plane of the surface of the mirror by the lines marked S S S. If you measure you will

see that the distance from the cork to the surface of the mirror is the same as the distance from that surface to the reflection of the cork. You will note that only a half of the bottle and *no part* of the die will be represented in a drawing.

Now let us turn to the outline of the Wallace Monument, Fig. 22. Note the horizon line

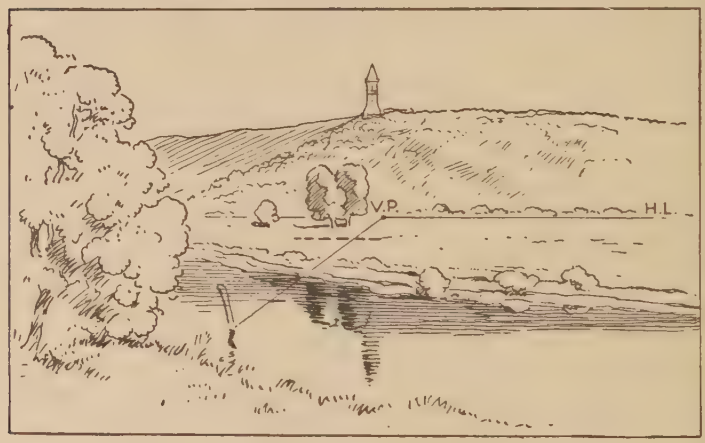


FIG. 22.

on which must be found the vanishing plane of the water surface if continued under the meadow. Note that the reflection of the Abbey Crag on which the monument stands is the same depth as the distance from the top of the Crag to the horizon line where the water is supposed to be.

On looking at the original photograph I could not understand why so much of the trees is

shown in the reflection till I grasped the fact that the imaginary surface of the water and not the base of the trunks must be the point of measurement. This I subsequently confirmed by consulting books. I have indicated by a line the surface of the water continued under the trees. Note also that while the crag and the hill beyond appear of practically the same height, yet the reflection of the hill falls far short of the duplication of the crag in the water, the far hill being at a greater distance from the eye than the crag.

This all points to the necessity of measuring and drawing the depths of the various reflections before Boreas sends a breeze to obliterate them.

The foregoing remarks apply to reflections from still water, but if the water is disturbed by waves or ripples the reflections are elongated and come nearer to you, getting lighter as they approach. The reflections of the solid objects are also broken up by transverse bars or patches of sky reflections. The reason of this is that the reflections come off from the curved surface of the waves, not from the plane surface of the water when still. Thus the same point of the tower will be reflected from the curves of a number of waves, these reflections getting gradually lighter as the waves come nearer you and farther from the source of light —namely, the tower. The bars or patches of light arise from the fact that part of the curve of the wave reflects the sky and not the tower,

the same curve reflecting part of the tower and part of the sky.

If you are out on a wet night you will notice that the lights of the gas lamps are reflected in a broken streak almost to your feet, getting less bright as they approach you. The reason is the same as already given with reference to the rough surface of the lake, the surface of the pavement not being perfectly level and being covered with multitudes of tiny wavelets each with its power of reflection.

That is the end of a long story; but you should not only "want to see the wheels go round," you should desire to ascertain why they do so.

One final postscript. Remember that you should endeavour to represent the surface of the water as well as the reflections therefrom. Seize upon anything which breaks the surface, be it the ripple from a boat or a wild duck's breast, to suggest the idea of surface.

FIGURES AND ANIMALS.

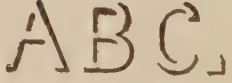
FIGURES in their proper place add much to a sketch. It is, however, a mistake to introduce a figure where it distracts attention from the chief interest, unless it is intended itself to be the point of interest with the landscape subservient to it. For example, if you are painting a village street and you make your horizon line too low, a figure in the near foreground may dwarf the buildings. The figures should group themselves and not create scattered and obtrusive points of interest. You must, therefore, not be tempted to draw a stationary cart where it happens to be standing if it does not blend itself into the general design. If you are painting a road and have made up your mind that a cart and horse should occupy a certain portion of the road, be on the outlook for one approaching you, and with a few pencil strokes indicate its bulk on your paper and the extent and direction of the shadow. Then take your sketch-book—which you must have ready—and make a rapid sketch of the horse and the relative size of the cart and driver, noting particularly the foreshortening, the projection of the wheels beyond

the side of the cart and the parts of the cart and horse which are in shadow. You can do this as the vehicle approaches, and can amplify the details if other carts come along later.

You should fill your notebook with sketches of figures, which you will find of great use for introduction into your pictures. You will thus learn that few people march like a guardsman, but have backs rounded by age or the bearing of burdens ; that they hold their heads to one side, bend to wheelbarrows, and take up hundreds of characteristic attitudes.

In rapidly blotting in a moving figure a little body colour is very useful. I remember once, when sketching in a village, I caught an old woman as she was crossing the street, and with a few strokes of the brush with a touch of Chinese white I had her finished before she got in at her door. In the drawing she looked as if she were moving.

Practise making sketches of figures by indicating the shadows on the principle of a shadow alphabet thus :—



It is very difficult to make figures appear natural if added later indoors, though it is often necessary to do so. A practical plan is to try experiments by drawing the figures with char-

PLATE 6.—AN EAST COAST HARBOUR (14 × 10 INCHES).

coal on your sketch. The charcoal can be dusted off without leaving a trace. If no appropriate animal or human figure presents itself do not fail to note on the sketch from any passer-by the size of a man at different positions of the scene. This will enable you to add a picturesque figure at home from your sketch-book, or you may get help from a figure taken from some picture or book. It is very useful to keep a notebook with references to pages in books where representations of figures or animals can be found ; or, better still, keep some small sheets of tracing paper or " grease-proof " paper beside you and make a rapid tracing of any useful figure you come across in a book. These tracings you can paste into an exercise book ruled in squares for sums. These squares, seen through the tracing, are useful in drawing the figures of a different size.

In a current volume of *Punch* you will find figures which offer suggestions. You don't want too slavishly to copy the drawing, but to get ideas as to attitudes, grouping, etc. These suggestions do not supersede the contents of your own sketch-book.

If you look at Fig. 24 you will see how perspective aids in drawing figures of correct size. If you by observation find the correct height of one figure, and draw lines to the horizon line (not necessarily to a vanishing point) from the head and the feet, this gives you a scale to find the height of other figures. If you want to in-

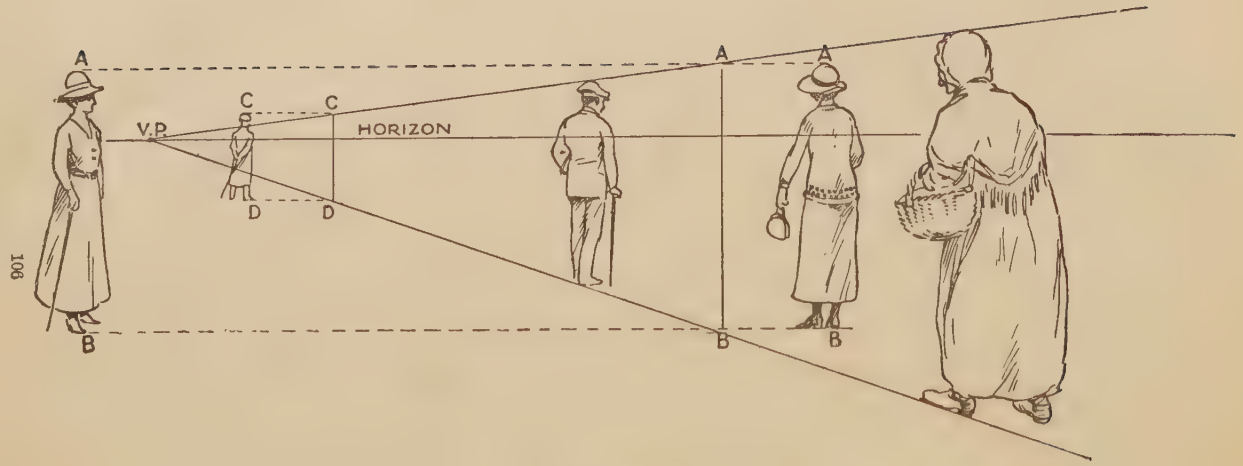


FIG. 24.

troduce a man at a part of the sketch outside the two lines drawn to the horizon line, mark the place where his feet are to stand and from that point draw a line parallel to the horizon line till it cuts the lower line running to the horizon. From the point on the upper vanishing line, immediately above the point where the lower lines cut one another, draw another horizontal line, which gives you the height of the man where you want him to stand. A reference to Fig. 24 will make this clearer than mere words.

In the notes on Perspective I have endeavoured to explain that the sides of a gable of a house do not slope inwards however high the house may be. Similarly, if all the windows are of the same size, you represent the upper windows as the same size as the lower ones. It accordingly follows that a man cleaning the upper window must be drawn the same size as the man working at a window on a lower floor. In other words, if a man is working on a high ladder and falls off it, if he is not killed but picks himself up, he will appear of the same height when on the ground as he was when on the ladder. It is this principle of dropping a man from the height of your scale which is of use in determining the height of the figure in your drawing.

Now look at Fig. 25, which is intended to represent three men standing on the top of three hayricks. Note the scale given by the lines drawn to the horizon from the head and feet

of the nearest man. On the principle of "If you had seen these roads before they were made," let us assume two of the ricks had not been made, but that you want to put in your sketch figures on their sites, and have a compelling desire that they should be of the right height. If you study Fig. 26 you will see you still have the man on the remaining stack to give the scale, thus fixing the size of the two men dropped from the clouds. The height of

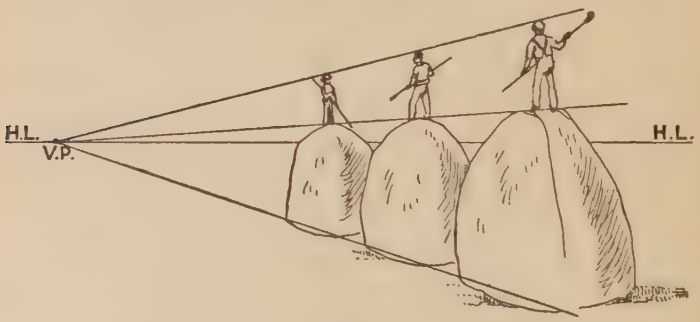


FIG. 25.

the woman on the same plane as the far-off man, and the man on the ladder who is on the same plane as the man on the stack, is got by means of parallel lines, as already explained.

It is thus a comparatively simple matter to ascertain by rule the correct size of a human being if the ground is level or is in one slope. It is a different matter if the ground is undulating. If there is a fence running from you across the field, you say a fence is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet

high. A man is about 6 feet, and you draw him nearly twice as high as the fence. Corn stooks or other objects may also afford a scale, and in practice you must seize upon anything of ascertained height to give you the measurement of the figure to be introduced at a particular point. It is difficult to explain the principle in words or even by a drawing, though you will find some interesting and instructive diagrams

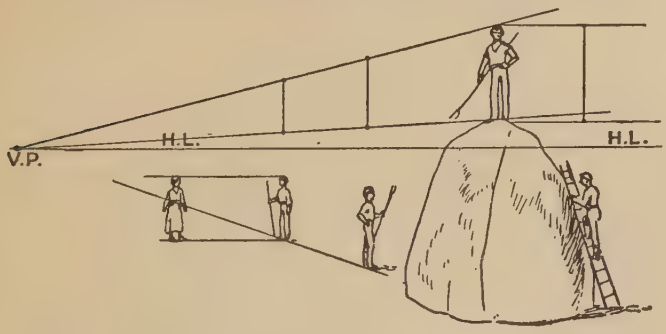


FIG. 26.

in Mr. W. L. Wyllie's *Nature's Laws and the Making of Pictures*. I have endeavoured diagrammatically to state the position in Fig. 27, dealing with a road receding from you at three different angles. The cottage stands on the horizon line—that is, the line on a level with the eye. The road slopes down to the point where the woman is standing, the vanishing point of that part of the road being at the point inside a square. The size of the figures on this section

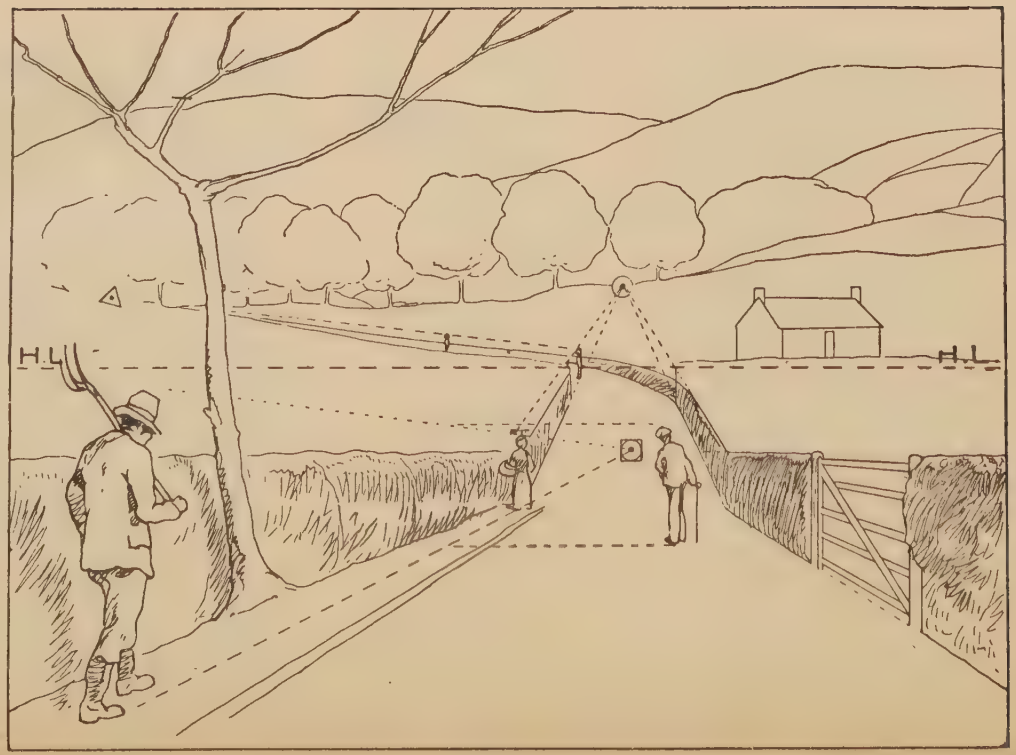


FIG. 27.

of the road are found with reference to that vanishing point or by horizontal lines drawn from the lines meeting at the vanishing point. The road then rises abruptly towards V.P., marked O. As the woman is at the beginning of the rise, lines from her head and feet drawn to O give the scale for figures on the hill. The same rule applies to figures on the bend of the road to the left which vanishes at the triangle.

To put the matter shortly, you have to find the size of a man at the point where there is any change in the slope, and from his head and feet have to draw lines to the vanishing line of the plane on which he stands. In ordinary sketching of undulating ground this is out of the question, and you must fall back on the plan of comparing the height of a hedge or fence with the height of a man. It, however, will do you no harm to know the perspective principle. If you look at Fig. 28, which is the same as Fig. 27 omitting the road, your eye will tell you that the ground is sloping from the relative size of the different figures.

If you seek to draw animals, note that they have periods of resting. Cows, after wandering about a field grazing, lie down in groups to chew the cud. After they have finished that interesting occupation you will find that one by one they rise and stand about, sometimes for a considerable time, before they start off again to seek pastures new. That is the time to catch them—some lying down and others standing.

I have seen a sodden cow stand immovable for a long time on a pouring day while I painted it from the shelter of a shed in the field. In painting a cow note that it is not only necessary to paint the red or black patches of colour, but also to show its rotundity. I used to keep a "tame" cow made of plaster of Paris, such as

Fig. 28.

milksellers put in their windows, which I found quite useful for drawing from.

If you desire to introduce a number of sheep in a landscape you can make a helpful appliance by buying a small sheet of celluloid, such as typists use for erasing, and cutting holes of the requisite sizes with a knife. This placed over

the drawing and rubbed with a damp sponge will lift the colour and leave a white blank on the paper, which with a brush you can shape and tint. The same article can be used for many other purposes, such as taking out the forms of flowers in a garden sketch.

FINISHING.

THE pangs of appetite warn you that the time for the midday meal approaches and your work of art has possibly approached a stage when you feel disposed to trample it under foot or to cast it into the river. Don't. Take it home with you and you will probably be alike pleased and surprised to find how much better it looks when regarded out of the full force of the noonday light. The strain of concentrated attention in sketching in a strong light is great, and it is difficult for a beginner's tired eye to judge of the effect of his sketch when it is side by side with the perfection of nature.

The next thing to do is to get the sketch into a frame, and for this purpose you should have one made of oak moulding, painted white, with the glass fixed in. Into such a frame you can slip any sketch and fix it with revolving catches. If the largest size of board you generally use is 14×10 inches, let your frame hold a board of that size. You can cut mounts with apertures to fit smaller sketches in cardboards 14×10 inches, so that your frame may suit any sketch. Before now, when from home, I have made a

rough frame out of the lid of a packing box with the aid of the hotel saw and hammer and a few tacks. Strips of straw board cut from an old dress box can be fashioned into a temporary frame.

The next thing to do is to stick up your framed sketch in your bedroom and study its perfections and imperfections. Outside you have been sitting near your work and have probably not sufficiently looked at it from a distance. In your early studies you must be content to leave well—or ill—alone, for if you begin altering them you will probably find you do not improve them. But as you advance along your artistic path you will gain experience, and be able to carry on indoors the work you have begun outside, by a general "pulling-together." You notice parts which can be softened, how the introduction of, or deepening of a shadow may help the effect, and many other things which will be improvements.

Possibly you find that in your attempts to hastily depict the changing sky, you have got the cloud masses into such a position that they do not compose properly and require alteration. The figures you have introduced may not be in the right place, or may be out of proportion. The holding of the sketch before the looking-glass may reveal that the perspective is wrong; and there are hosts of other things which you may put right. Only be sure you don't "mess" the sketch or destroy

its original crispness. It is at this stage that your friend the artist can be helpful. If you get him to look at your effort, he probably can point out what is wrong.

I personally find that, if I want to "finish" a sketch, I cannot do so out of doors with the distractions of nature around. In my own case I seldom return to the same subject more than twice, finding that, if I do, I lose interest in the work, and over-elaborate it, a difficulty which does not present itself to many well-known artists. I, however, may helpfully work for hours in the house at a drawing, and after I have got it finished, as far as my ability allows, I may take it back to nature and see how it then looks, and what corrections may still be made. One warning is not to spoil the freshness of your sketch by over-elaboration.

If, when you get your sketch into the house, you find it "hopeless," do not be tempted to spend time upon it, but rather reserve your energies for another subject next day.

You may be forced to do your painting by artificial light. Daylight is one of the things of which we amateurs envy the artist in having the advantage in the winter season. While we by day are engaged in summing up columns in a ledger or weighing pounds of margarine, we picture the man with the red tie revelling in his north light. I have to paint at night by artificial light for the same reason that I have to dig my garden with an acetylene lamp

fastened to a digging fork—lack of sunlight. And it is wonderful how you can get on under the gas jet if you know and love your colours. But you have to know them. Thus, if it is your practice to use French blue and raw sienna for the shadow part of trees, you can guess how to mix these by artificial light. You may get the mixture too blue or too yellow at parts, which may require rectification "between sermons" on a Sunday. Of course, you can draw in black and white to your heart's content at night.

It will be a great comfort to you if you can get some garret or lumber-room which you can use as a studio, fitted with a substantial easel on which you can leave your painting to work on at odd moments, and study it at a distance.

A PRACTICAL LESSON.

It has been suggested that it might be of help to beginners if I showed how, in practice, I carried out a sketch, by reproduction of a drawing in the different stages. This I have endeavoured to do, but have found it no easy task, as naturally a sketch done "to order" with a definite object in view is liable to lack in spontaneity. Moreover, I do not pretend that I have carried out the sketch in the method more accompiished professors would do, but it is one of many ways of doing a sketch. In practice my stages would probably overlap. One artist would roughly finish the sky first, another the distance before touching the sky, while a third might begin by concentrating on the tree and getting the tone and depth of the shadows to set the key for the sky, distance, and foreground. Also, if you can get the various tones as far as possible in a single wash, that would be a consummation to be desired, but difficult or impossible for a beginner.

PLATE 7.—A PRACTICAL LESSON—FIRST STAGE.

First Stage.

A rough outline in charcoal to fix the position of the various masses is very useful. After you have drawn the outline in lead pencil the charcoal can be dusted off without leaving a trace. If you use the pencil first, you doubtless will have recourse to india-rubber which more or less affects the surface of the paper. The charcoal marks help you in the pencil drawing.

When you have got past your earlier attempts at sketching, you may find it useful, before you begin the actual sketch, to make a small rough drawing with a soft pencil, to get into your head the effect you are aiming at, and the distribution of the light and shade.

Second Stage.

The pencil outline after the charcoal lines have been dusted off. You will note it is sufficiently detailed to show the boundaries of the various colours and washes. You should not only give the outline of the large tree, but also the principal subdivisions of the masses of foliage and the main branches. In practice I seldom draw the clouds with a pencil. In the present case, the clouds are of great importance, as they have to balance the mass of the strong tree.

PLATE 8.—A PRACTICAL LESSON—SECOND STAGE.

PLATE 9.—A PRACTICAL LESSON—THIRD STAGE.

Third Stage.

This shows the first washes of colour, the primary object being to get quit of the distracting white paper. The cobalt blue of the sky is carried over the distance and over the large tree. It is not carried over the trees beyond the field, as there were autumnal tints in them, and I desired to keep the yellow or orange colours pure, at least to begin with. A general wash of green is carried over the field and foreground. This wash need not be of one colour of green, but may indicate the local colour of the different parts. Do not be afraid of making these preliminary washes too strong. You will be surprised how weak they look when you get in the darks.

Fourth Stage.

We now reach the stage of broadly getting in the local colour. The big tree, being of the olive green tone of late summer, is painted with French blue, Indian yellow, and some raw sienna. The overgrown hedge has more blue in the green. The trees in the middle distance have raw sienna and yellow ochre in their composition. The lighter shadows of the clouds are put in with French blue and light red.

PLATE 10. A PRACTICAL LESSON—FOURTH STAGE.

Fifth Stage.

We are now arriving at the more interesting part of the work. The plate shows the shadows put in broadly, this process enabling us to judge better of the ultimate effect. The colours I used for the shadows of the trees were French blue and raw sienna.

Sixth Stage.

This plate shows the completed sketch. As regards the large tree you will note the effect of the introduction of the branches, and the deepening of the shadows; also the attempts to improve the drawing and the taking out of the piercing lights, by washing out. The grass in the foreground is strengthened, and broken colour introduced into various parts of the sketch. The shadow of the principal cloud is also strengthened to help to balance the mass of the tree, and the cows in the field are painted as adding interest to assist in balancing that side of the drawing.

PLATE 12.—A PRACTICAL LESSON—SIXTH STAGE.
IN CHESHIRE (7 × 5 INCHES).

NOTES ON THE PLATES.

THE reproductions of some of my sketches are not introduced as embellishments or as great works of art, but to serve as suggestions of some of the many varieties of subjects at the door of the amateur as much as of the artist. If they do not adorn a tale they may possibly serve to point a moral, and I now propose to state the reasons for their introduction.

PLATE 1. FRONTISPIECE.

"The Tweed above Coldstream."

This sketch might be considered in connection with the section entitled "Skies." I endeavoured to get perspective and motion into the clouds, and I also aimed at simplicity and composition in painting them. The paper, measuring 20 × 14 inches, was twice the size of that I use as a rule. Much of the detail of the distance—which was a feature in the subject—is naturally lost in the small reproduction. When I sat down to do the sketch

I foresaw two difficulties. The first was that on account of the stiff breeze the water was rough and of a leaden hue, rendering it dull and insipid. At home I washed out the water several times and repainted it. The next difficulty was how to deal with the triangular space of bare ground in the foreground. If I had introduced a human figure or animal in the foreground it would have attracted the eye from the distance where the real interest is centred. I accordingly put in the bushes and rushes to vary the monotony, and to break the line of the river bank. Note how the post —which actually was there—helps to "shove back" the river beyond. The sheep are also helpful in the same way. I only spent an afternoon on the spot, but subsequently worked at the sketch at home.

Plate 2.

"*High Street, Pittenweem.*"

Pittenweem is one of the fishing villages on the shores of Fife which are the resort of numerous artists. The district affords a wealth of subjects. I had intended to paint the street some afternoon when the sun would have put the right-hand buildings in shadow. I, however, struck a grey day when there was no strong light or shade. This sketch was

selected for reproduction on account of the perspective. In Fig. 6, there is an outline of a photograph of the street, part of which is included in the sketch. You will find my drawing is not very far " out " as regards the houses, but the church tower is not quite right. I had not then read the notes on Perspective in this book ! The tower should have been treated as practically a case of " Parallel Perspective," and the top of the tower should not have sloped down so much to the left. The figures were all sketched from passers-by. The hurrying man in the centre of the roadway is rather tall. You will note I have arranged the figures in groups. One spectator suggested I had made the street more like Piccadilly than Pittenweem. I may incidentally mention that from among the onlookers I had a pressing offer to purchase this superb work of art on the spot, and gathered from whispered conversations at my back that £1 was considered its value. Any advance on £1 ?

Plate 3.

"*A Spring Day.*"

The idea in reproducing this drawing was to give an example of the painting of leafless trees. You will notice how the clouds, the dark horse, and the rooks help the " balance."

This water-colour was considered worthy of a place in the Exhibition of the Royal Scottish Academy of 1900.

Plate 4.

"*The Post Office, Cornhill-on-Tweed.*"

In this sketch I endeavoured to indicate the red tiles without painting too many of them. The postman I drew as he was standing. The postmistress was not available at the time, but she kindly gave me "a sitting" later. I drew her in my sketch-book, cutting out a silhouette. I used the remaining blank as a stencil and rubbed out the exposed part of the sketch with a sponge, afterwards colouring the white paper. To connect up these two figures I, at home, put in the children.

Plate 5.

"*In Our Garden.*"

This sketch is one of many I have done at odd moments in my own garden, and may afford suggestions to other amateurs. The masses of rock plants are very difficult to indicate, and the foreground of a garden sketch is not easy to deal with. You will notice how the dark trees throw up the lupins.

Plate 6.

"*An East Coast Harbour*."

This was a morning sketch in September, with a bright light shining through a slight haze. Friends told me that the inclusion of the two similar parallel sails with their continued reflections was a mistake. I put in the small boat to help to balance the composition. A group of figures on the quay to the right of the small boat would have added interest and led the eye up the hill.

CONCERNING TECHNIQUE IN WATER-COLOUR.

A BOARD schoolmistress recently told me that when painting was added to her curriculum—a subject of which she admitted her profound ignorance—her method of instruction was to give out the paint-boxes with the simple direction, "Now, paint."

My advice to the hesitant would be the same, "Now, paint;" and by making mistakes you gradually learn how to avoid them. The great thing is to get a start made.

But as you proceed in your practice and gradually acquire a certain amount of dexterity, and your perception in matters artistic improves, you probably, like myself, begin to inquire what should be your aim as regards technique. This is a question much more easily asked than answered. If you ask a policeman outside South Kensington Station the way to the Museum, he will glibly say, "First to the left and second to the right;" but should you make the same request for information to an officer at King's Cross, he

will direct you to take 'bus 57, and to inquire again when you get farther on your journey. Knowing the impossibility of directing any one as to the best method of water-colour painting, it is obvious that I could not adopt the tactics of the Kensington officer in blue, and my idea was that possibly I might put you on a 'bus going in the right direction.

The traditionary policeman " is never there when he is wanted." And at the artistic crossing the informatory guide is often absent. Good art critics are not " thick as autumnal leaves that strew the woods in Vallombrosa." If you are interested in gardening, carpentry, or even crochet, you will find penny or twopenny papers devoted to these interesting pursuits, but art apparently cannot support such a periodical. One tires of " Appreciations." What the ordinary searcher after truth wants is candid criticism, not sitting on the fence in these days when Bolshevism threatens the world of art. If you notice that the art critic has a knot on his handkerchief, it is to remember Whistler—Whistler the outcast who came into his own, followed by the discomfiture of those who had jeered at him.

But to return to our policeman. You would receive a rude shock if in answer to your inquiry you were told there was no such place as South Kensington Museum! But the answer to your question, " What is the best method of water-colour painting? " must be,

"There is no best method of water-colour painting."

I have indicated on another page some of the various expedients adopted by artists to produce paintings in water-colour, but no one could say that one scheme was right and another one wrong. Indeed, if we consulted our friend Tom Badger, R.W.S., he would probably praise as the best a method very different to that which he at one time practised. It, however, might be interesting if we amateurs were to consider together some of the methods which have been employed by different artists past and present.

As has been repeatedly stated, water-colour art had its home, if not its origin, in Great Britain, and had its commencement in the work of "the topographers" in the middle of the eighteenth century. These craftsmen had as their object the production of antiquarian or local views for reproduction as engravings for the embellishment of books, and their endeavours were directed rather in that direction than towards aims artistic; their object being literal transcriptions of nature. The method they adopted was to draw the subject with pen and ink, the drawing being thereafter lightly washed with a few tints of thin colour. Paul Sanby (1725–1809), who was the first notable disciple of this school, employed a ground tint varied with blue and sepia, over which washes of colour were superimposed.

John Cozens, who died in 1799, employed a tint composed of indigo and Indian red in the early stages; and this practice, we are told, was long retained. The lead pencil or reed pen was used to finish the drawings.

Thomas Girtin, the friend and youthful rival of Turner, who died at an early age in 1802, was the first artist to break away from the previous practice of employing merely the earthy minerals with sepia indigo and Indian ink, and who painted scenes in the colours of nature. He frequently preferred to paint on cartridge paper—a practice which testifies to the sureness of his touch, rendering alteration unnecessary.

From the foregoing notes on the early history of water-colour art, it is obvious that correct drawing was an absolute necessity for the satisfactory production of the works. Turner himself began by making architectural drawings, and this early training stood him in good stead in the extraordinary development of his art. His work had many phases. His results were often arrived at by minute touches, but upon occasion he even painted on wet paper.

Cotman (1782–1824), who has been described as the greatest of all the water-colour painters born after Turner, relied on untouched washes or blots of colour, allowing the value of the paper to tell. Both Girtin and Cotman employed strong washes of colour flowing

from a full brush, and placed exactly where they were desired. These washes were allowed to lie where they fell without being subsequently teased and worried.

The traditions of the early practitioners were continued by such artists as David Cox (1783–1859), whose artistic career was interfered with by his labours as a teacher. He consequently developed a mechanical facility, and his best works are considered to be those of the later part of his life. He used a full brush, and aimed at general effects, avoiding minute detail. He often allowed the colours to run together, and did not disdain the use of the knife. There is a general impression that washing out and scraping are things of yesterday, but these notes show that such artifices were employed by the old masters. About 1830 body colour came into general use.

Some of the water-colours produced fifty or sixty years ago were extraordinarily beautiful—beautiful in the simplicity of their technique. I have in my possession a sketch of that period by E. T. Crawford, R.S.A., an artist forgotten now even by many of his own countrymen. The subject consists of cliffs with a turbulent sea in front, painted with a dexterous hand, and although a finished composition, obviously the result of the work of perhaps an hour and a half. The hand and brain attuned, it was easy to reproduce quickly

the effect aimed at. The sky and clouds are simply washed in, but so as to accord with the scheme of composition. The cliffs are painted with a single wash, varied here and there to represent the local colour, the shadows being introduced later in the same simple manner. The sea is treated in a similar way, the foam of the waves and the high lights on the wet boulders recently covered by the sea being painted frankly in body colour. But the result was the finished sketch, providing everything necessary for the production of a studio picture, and in itself, as a sketch, a delight to the beholder.

As a boy I remember being set to copy another water-colour by the same artist. It consisted of the wooded bank of a stream, with the light striking in from the right, and a dark Scots fir thrown up by the glints of sun on the trees beyond. Like the cliffs in the seascape, the local colour of the bank of wood was washed in in a single wash of the final strength, and that wash when dry was broken by the shadows struck in with a neutral tint without retouching. The fir foliage consisted of a blot of strong colour from a full brush, allowed to run down slightly and shaped as regards its edges with masterly skill, the trunk and branches being then added, the whole being completed at one short sitting. I recollect how my copy was wonderfully like the original if you put them up side by side and retired to

the other side of the room—if the room was long enough. But at close quarters what a difference was there. In the copy the final strength was only arrived at after several washes, and the shadows indicated after several essays, resulting in muddiness in place of transparency.

I have dwelt at some length on these two drawings, as it seems to me the production of sketches by these methods might well be the aim and object of us amateurs. In their simplicity of style and procedure they serve as models worthy of striving after, however far short our efforts may fall of the mark. The apparent facility of such productions was the result of many years of study and experience gained. We may be excused if we do not attain to that desired perfection.

Although somewhat apart from our subject, it may also here be noted that in the earlier part of the nineteenth century very beautiful portraits were produced in water-colour, the draperies being skilfully painted in broad washes with a directness of which I have seen no examples at the present day.

After Cox there were, of course, many notable water-colour painters; but the productions of many of the artists painting in that medium greatly deteriorated, their work generally being characterized by excessive detail, smallness of style, and the employment of excessive stipple in place of broad washes. The pictures

of Birket Foster may be taken as samples of the handicraft. New ideas in art were, however, to present themselves. Numbers of artists deserted the school which had for its object the depicting of natural objects as affected by the atmosphere, and directed their endeavours to giving their impressions or interpretations of what they had observed in nature. They forsook the formulæ of the old masters and concentrated on the decorative quality of their productions. Others had souls above the painting of subjects with literary or topographical interest, and strove after rendering truthfully effects of light. Recourse was had to nature itself, rather than to the rules and formulæ of the past.

In addition to the outstanding work of English artists, more recent water-colour art was greatly enriched by the productions of Scottish artists who employed a bold style of painting. The work of these men had a great effect on water-colour painting generally, and when their paintings were exhibited in London exhibitions side by side with the paintings then in vogue, the strength and virility of the former emphasized the littleness and feebleness of many of the latter. The good seed then sown still thrives, and even at the present day you will find the work of Scottish artists taking a very prominent position in exhibitions south of the Tweed.

The materials for painting in water-colours

in the earlier days of the art differed as much from those now at the command of any one, as the drugs and simples of past ages differ from the modern pharmacopœia. Apart from the difficulty of getting suitable paper, the earlier water-colour artists no doubt had to search for new colours, and had laboriously to grind and compound them—a fact which must have had a restraining effect, promoting simplicity in colouring. With the discoveries of new tints and introduction of "moist water-colours" new opportunities were presented, with possibilities of working at greater speed and with accentuated strength. Some of the work thus produced almost vied in force with oil painting.

Although, as we have already seen, the practice of painting on wet paper was not unknown to the earlier practitioners, some water-colourists were to "out-Herod Herod" in this method. The paper was not merely damped, but after the preliminary painting was soaked in water till the colour sank into the paper, modifications being obtained by scrubbing, stronger touches of colour being afterwards applied. Arthur Melville was a famous exponent of this school.

The employment of colour, more fluid than of yore, and the allowing of the tints to blend when wet, is a device frequently and successfully adopted in more recent times.

Development on different lines is evidenced

by the practice of some men to paint entirely in body colour on a tinted ground, or even on linen.

In these very modern days we even find a recurrence to the original idea of drawing with the pen combined with thin washes of colour.

Some modern work shows extraordinary control of the medium, and manual dexterity as well as artistic feeling. I recently noticed in a periodical a drawing of everyday life produced by the three-colour process, the original of which, even if larger than the reproduction, could only have been produced by brush control which, I imagine, would have been a surprise to Girtin.

We have now raced through the history of water-colour painting in this country, and arrive at the present time, when we find the art still enjoying popularity among artists and the public. We see that all the technical methods which have been in use in the past are still employed by artists, and successfully and delightfully employed. As I have pointed out, the foundation of the art rested on drawing, and the latter-day movement of relegating drawing to a back seat compared to colour, light, or effect, may, till this phase has passed, have a deleterious effect on water-colour painting in particular. I cannot understand why objects in a landscape should not be accurately drawn or suggested without detracting from

colour, light, atmosphere, or any other desirable quality. In fact, bad drawing attracts the eye to obvious defects, and prevents us from fully appreciating the colour, as much as a false note of colour hinders us from being attracted by fine drawing. Is it not the case that in "The Market Cart" of Gainsborough the facts that the horse is too long and is not in the same plane as the cart, and that the foreground figures are too small, distract our eye from the other beauties?

Having now traversed the ages, who will be bold enough to say what is the best method of painting in water-colours? Judging from my own observation, I think the general consensus of opinion will be found to be that the highest form of the art consists in painting in one stroke—*à premier coup*—that is, in putting on the colour of the proper strength where it is intended to be, and when there placed to be left severely alone, and thus obtaining the advantage of the white paper. It is towards that method I am personally irresistibly attracted in my manipulative endeavours, though I find my aim utterly beyond my grasp.

The paintings of some of those who now adopt the process to which I have just referred produce work which is insipid and flat, and even if this method may be the ideal it is not the only object to be striven after. Indeed, many masterpieces could not have been pro-

duced if there had been a restriction to that method. Some of the water-colours I admire most were the result of very different craftsmanship. This, however, I think must be grasped by us amateurs, that great results can only be obtained by decided strokes, whether these strokes are great or small, sensitive or vigorous, as light as a zephyr or as strong as a hurricane. The *coup*, whether it be *premier* or *dernier*, must be decided and certain.

If in this chapter we have set out to search for the unattainable—finality in art—it becomes easier if we look at the question from the point of view of the amateur. If I am asked, not "What is the best technical method?" but, "What is the best technical method for the amateur?" I should unhesitatingly say:—Dry paper, careful drawing, and the endeavour to get the effect as directly and decidedly as possible without messing and teasing—the employment of one stroke or dab of the brush in place of several, and allowing the white paper to tell.

If this be the aim it is not easy of attainment unless you have a natural facility helping you on these lines. In my own case it must be, "Don't do as I do," but "Do as I say."

The reason why I recommend this method is on account of its simplicity. The soaking of the painting is as easy for you as for any artist if you have access to a tub. The painting with body colour mixed with all the tints

is quite legitimate. But these methods and even painting on damp paper entail a certain amount of what the conjurer called "preparation." What the amateur wants to do is to put a sketch book and a paint-box in his pocket; to paint or not to paint as the spirit moves him; and to be freed from the necessity of preliminary arrangements.

If, however, you cannot manage the *premier coup* business do not be discouraged. It is a gift. What your hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, whether that hand be deft and facile or the reverse.

One word of warning to the beginner. At the start of your career in the realms of art do not be led away by the new theories of the man with the eccentric hat and the Parisian tie. Learn to draw; paint as well as your powers will permit. When you have acquired dexterity you can experiment as you will, and you may paint in new methods or invent one of your own. You may also acquire a funny hat and a tie to match.

COMPOSITION

As you make progress in your artistic career, and desire to make still further advances, you will find yourself confronted by the difficulty caused by the absence of definite rules of conduct.

It is told of a traveller in Ireland, who asked the waiter what he could have for dinner, that he received the reply, "Ye can have whatever ye loike, but I advise ye to have a chop." This candid recommendation doubtless implied that it was a chop or nothing; but in matters artistic the difficulty is caused by the embarrassment of choice. You can do whatever you like, and if some one advises you to do a particular thing, you can take the advice or not as you choose.

The reason of this is that painting is not a trade or a profession, but an art ungoverned by fixed rules, deviation from which would spell disaster. If you are apprenticed to a chemist and do not compound the drugs according to certain prescriptions, there are suggestions of a coroner's inquest. Should you wish to become an accountant, you are taught

to put figures in particular columns, and if you fail to do so your client may become bankrupt or you may find yourself in the dock. If, however, you are an amateur artist, you may break the common rules without anything very dreadful happening. Every artist is a law unto himself. One, for example, seriously counsels you not to use body colour, but if you disregard his advice you will find yourself in company with hosts of distinguished painters.

I suppose that every rule of composition has been broken, and broken successfully, by members of the artistic fraternity. In these circumstances, it is clearly not the business of an amateur to expound the theories of composition—theories scattered through many works, and given in words not easily understood by simple folk.

I shall, however, endeavour in the following lines to set forth some of the leading rules of composition, so far as I have been able to collect them, for the help of others struggling *in gurgite vasto*. I do so, not because it is the work of amateurs to compose pictures as distinguished from painting what they see in nature, but because an elementary knowledge of these rules may help them in selecting subjects for sketches, or in pulling them together and correcting them when made.

Unity is the very essence of composition. For this reason there should, in a picture, be one dominant light and one dominant dark,

one chief point of interest, and one principal mass of colour.

In nature things group themselves. Clouds arrange themselves in masses, trees grow together for mutual protection, sheep and cows collect in herds, men gather at the street corners. This law should be exemplified in a picture. The masses should be large and simple, contrary to the usual practice of the junior painter whose great idea is to give as much as he can for the money. He wastes his substance in riotous living amid details, and shuns breadth and the simple life or subject. In the cause of *Unity* a scattered general effect is to be avoided. For this reason I have elsewhere tried to dissuade the young amateur from selecting a subject which entails upon him facing the sun. Then you get the scattered lights which militate against unity, save in experienced hands. Under the same heading may be included the advice to avoid excessive variety of form, or strong contrasts of form and also of colour.

Balance is obtained by the judicious use of contrast. A light mass balances a dark mass contrasted with it, curves counteract straight lines, warm colours contrast with cold, interest may balance mass.

When it is said that the two sides of a picture should balance one another, it does not mean that both sides should necessarily or advisably be the same. You could not imagine a more inartistic subject than a street with

similar houses on both sides running from you down the centre of the paper.

The fact that interest may balance mass is perhaps the most important of the above points for the amateur, a knowledge of which may make presentable a sketch otherwise doomed to failure. We amateurs have a delight in selecting a landscape with a dark tree, or part of a dark tree on the right or left side of the paper. We think the upright tree breaks the monotony of the flat landscape, which it helps to "shove back." Unfortunately, there is often no tree to balance on the other side, and we find useful the knowledge of the fact that the mass of the tree can be balanced by an interesting sky, or even a small figure attracting the eye. Another point to note is that if you must have your dark tree, do not keep it too near the edge of the paper. Place it rather nearer the centre and allow a peep of distance to be seen between the tree and the margin of the paper. You will be surprised how this helps the balance.

When you come to the rounding up of the items composing your sketch, see that not only do the whole but also the individual parts balance. There should be symmetry or balance of masses. For example, one side of a tree may not balance the other side, and some alteration of the outline or the introduction of a cow under the spreading branches may counteract the one-sided tendency. Think not, however,

that the clipping of a tree as by a topiary artist is what is recommended. An experienced eye can only say when a subject "balances."

Moreover, not only should the two sides of a picture balance, but also the upper part and the lower part. Thus, if the dark shadow part of a massive tree fills the upper parts of the paper, you must get strength or interest in the foreground to bring up the balance. Interest in the sky may balance the foreground.

Curvature is one of the great beauties of nature, which abhors straight lines as it does a vacuum. The path across the meadow made by the feet of rustics or animals does not take the straight line beloved by engineers, but adopts graceful curves, bending to avoid the swamp or to follow the gentler slope. These curves are the things to look out for and to depict. It is extremely useful to study the analysis of the curves of a well-known figure or landscape picture as dissected by a good writer, and to search for and trace the curves laid down apparently artlessly in other paintings. These curves pervading the picture should radiate from or towards one point, or two balancing points, but not too obviously, and the lines should be broken here and there. Therefore, in practice, search for these curves in nature, and make a feature of, say, the sweep of the road towards the cottage in mid-distance which is the central note of your sketch. But the curves should be counteracted by

straight lines—also interrupted or broken here and there—as if you have nothing but curves a disquieting effect is produced. Note that horizontal lines give a feeling of repose, whereas curved lines suggest energy and movement.

Repetition in form, colour, and movement is also constantly found in nature. The clouds repeat themselves in somewhat similar forms, there are family likenesses in trees and in animals. Men and beasts repeat the same movements, and take up similar attitudes. The same colours will be found in different objects in the landscape. But though repetition should be carried out in your work, the repetition should not be exactly the same.

The observance of the above rules tends to promote *Harmony* in your work, but that harmony can only come after long observation and study.

ON MAKING FRAMES.

You will find that your sketch looks much better in a frame which shuts off the little morsel of the earth you have painted from the great world around. Moreover, the glass gives the water-colours a pleasant sheen. The professional artist frames his paintings, and why should we not imitate him in this as in other ways ?

It adds to the interest if you can make a frame yourself upon occasion. The simplest method is to get a sheet of cardboard, cut a hole in it of appropriate size, get a piece of glass, and bind the whole together with *passe-partout.*

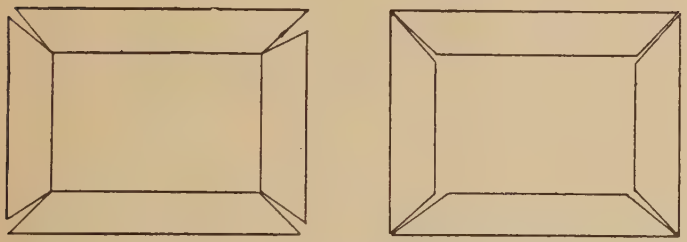
If you are a handy man, and dabble in carpentry, you know how to construct wooden frames, but the following suggestions are given for making simple frames of that material with no previous practical experience. Get a length of half-inch match boarding, 3 inches wide, such as is used for lining walls. This is planed at the mills and ready for use. Get the pattern which has a bevel at each side (see Fig. 29). The match boarding is " tongued

and grooved"—that is to say, it has a projecting tongue on the one edge and a groove on the other, so as to admit of one piece fitting into the next when applied to its usual purpose of lining a wall. The tongue edge is the one to put next the picture, the rebate at the back of the tongue making a recess to hold the glass. Fold a piece of rectangular paper as shown in the figure, so as to get two angles of 45 degrees. Suppose your sketch measures 14 × 10 inches, mark off with a pencil on the tongued edge of the board a space equal to $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and with the angle paper draw lines across the wood at angles of 45 degrees from the inside edge of the board. You then must beg, borrow, or steal a tenon saw—that is, a thin saw with a thick back, of the type used in kitchens. The one in your kitchen is likely to lack teeth and not to be straight, but some joiner friend will lend you one. Next, saw across the board on the pencil lines, and the top of the frame is cut. Repeat the process and you have the bottom. Mark off two pieces for the sides, each $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches long on the tongued edge, and saw them. Lay the four pieces face upwards on a table, and you are certain to find the pieces do not fit at the angles, but that some, or all, of the angles gape at the inside or the outside edges. This failing is shown in an exaggerated manner in Fig. 29.

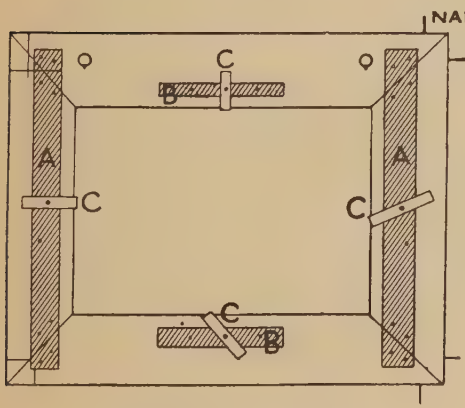
You must, therefore, test each angle with the

SECTION THROUGH MATCHBOARD

MATCH BOARD MARKED FOR CUTTING MITRES



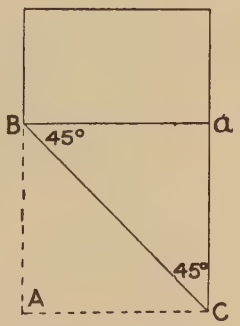
SHOWING MITRES BADLY CUT



BACK OF FRAME

SHOWING :–

A·A· STRIPS TO HOLD FRAME TOGETHER
B·B· STRIPS TO KEEP PICTURE IN PLACE
CCCC. REVOLVING PIECES OF WOOD TO HOLD PICTURE AGAINST GLASS



SHEET OF PAPER. IF A IS FOLDED OVER TO a, THE ANGLES aBC AND aCB WILL BE ANGLES OF 45 DEGREES.

FIG. 29.

angle paper, marking the true angle of 45 degrees with a pencil, and be sure that each length of the frame is exactly the same length as the one opposite. Pare down the ends of the pieces of wood till they correspond with the pencil marks. When you have got the pieces to fit, turn them face downward on the table. Take two slips of thin wood and nail them on to the backs of the two ends of the frame. Place the four sides in position and drive nails through the ends of the strips so as to fasten the top and bottom to the sides. The frame should then be sufficiently rigid to allow you to drive 2-inch wire nails through the corners, boring holes first with a bradawl. Nail two thin pieces of wood at the back of the top and bottom pieces of the frame, with pieces on the top to swivel, by turning which you can fasten the sketch into the frame. Sandpaper the frame and give it a thin coat of white oil paint. When dry fill up any defects with putty, sandpaper again and give two coats of white distemper, fasten the glass in with a few sprigs, and your frame is finished and ready for the drawing.

N.B.—Your framemaker will criticize your frame as unfavourably as your artist will the work of art.

HOW TO HANG PICTURES.

Pictures should be hung with the tops—or preferably the bottoms—of the frames in a straight line. The ordinary man or woman does not know this, and consequently gets a " spotty " effect on the walls. Suppose you have several sketches all in frames of the same size, it is not an easy matter to get them level. The hooks from the picture rail will be level, or if there is no rail the nails must be put in on a straight line. See that each ring is exactly the same distance from the top of the frames. Get a coil of bird-cage wire. Measure the distance from the picture hook to the ring if the frame is to be hung at the proper height. Cut off the lengths of wire a few inches too long. Make a loop at the end of each length of wire to go over the picture hook or nail. Some time when the cook has a night out, drive two nails into the kitchen floor the exact distance apart of the space from the picture hook to the ring. Put the loop of the wire over one of the nails in the

floor. Pull the wire till it is taut and bend the end round the other nail and turn it up about an inch or a little more. Do this with each of the wires and you can be certain that each is the same length. Use two wires for each frame, and your row of pictures will be as level as the ground which the camel preferred.

Hanging of pictures is " composition."

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

GIVEN some natural aptitude no one will regret taking up water-colour sketching as a hobby. Disappointments you will have, but these are more than compensated for by the pleasure of even an occasional success. With such a resource you care not where you pass a holiday. You need not bury your wife in some lonely shooting lodge, and the proximity of a seaside golf course is not a necessity for your happiness. I think it was Robert Louis Stevenson who said that a taste for water-colours was an advantage in a husband. Some sketching grounds are naturally better than others, but you can sketch anywhere.

Possibly for the amateur the greatest pleasure is derived from learning to see subjects for sketches as he takes his walks abroad. As he progresses in his studies he will be surprised to find how pictures " compose " in unexpected places in a way he never dreamed of before. The absence of any artistic training is obvious in the great majority of amateur photographs,

where the selection of a view is in many cases the reverse of happy.

But if your training leads to happiness it has also its corresponding disadvantages, from the fact that an ugly building or an unfortunate line of railing grates upon your artistic temperament just as a false note jars on the ear of a musician. It is the same with colour. Your vestas must have tops of "art brown," not unpleasant pink.

The practice of art also lends great interest to a visit to an exhibition of paintings. Your smattering of knowledge has perhaps the effect of causing you to neglect Michael Angelo for the landscapes of Tom Badger, R.W.S. One reads how a certain artist was influenced by Velasquez. You are more likely to be influenced by your friend Badger, and possibly to your considerable advantage. You may come to the Velasquez influence later.

One word of warning: do not be affected too much by the advice of any one artist or critic. He knows much more about art than you do, and his advice on cardinal points may be of much help; but art is many-sided and his interpretation of nature is not the only one. Many artists have particular theories and modes of execution which may not commend themselves to others. Thus, suppose you read Ruskin's *Elements of Drawing*, which you will no doubt do with much interest, you will admire alike his literary style, his minute

observation of nature, and his enthusiasm. You may, however, be depressed by the feeling that it is hopeless for you to learn to sketch if you have for months to carry out his lessons as to shading a white ball or copying photographs. You will, however, notice that while Ruskin advises you to use the most meticulous care in drawing, he scoffs at learning the laws of perspective. Try to draw the flat octagonal base of a sundial without any knowledge of these laws and see what a mess you make of it. Besides, Ruskin afterwards repented of what he had said, and wrote a treatise on perspective —not easily understood by the common herd of amateurs.

From one good picture, carefully studied, you will learn much more than from many treatises such as this. Not only will you be interested in the methods of artists, but from their works you will get hints as to the selection of subjects for sketches. If you are despondent about your own work, go to an exhibition. You will see there are many bad artists as well as yourself.

When a squad of soldiers is being trained one is told to step from the ranks and put the others through their facings. I have stepped from the ranks—I am afraid unasked—I have issued the words of command I have learned from others to the best of my ability, and it is for you to say with what useful effect. After my brief tenure of temporary office I again resume my humble

place in the ranks, to make the same old mistakes I have been trying to tell you not to make.

In conclusion, if you have read these pages without deriving profit, read them again.

THE END.

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